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THE WORKS

OF

W. M. THACKERAY

THE WORKS

OF

WILLIAM MAKEPEACE THACKERAY

IN TWENTY-SIX VOLUMES.

VOLUME XX.

CATHERINE: A STORY

MEN'S WIVES

THE BEDFORD-ROW CONSPIRACY

LONDON
SMITH, ELDER, & CO., 15 WATERLOO PLACE
1902

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CATHERINE: A STORY

MEN'S WIVES

AND

THE BEDFORD-ROW CONSPIRACY

BY

WILLIAM MAKEPEACE THACKERAY

WITH ILLUSTRATIONS BY
THE AUTHOR, LUKE FILDES, AND R. B. WALLACE

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CATHERINE: A STORY.

BY IKEY SOLOMONS, ESQ., JUNIOR.

ADVERTISEMENT.

THE story of "Catherine," which appeared in *Fraser's Magazine* in 1839-40, was written by Mr. Thackeray, under the name of Ikey Solomons, Jun., to counteract the injurious influence of some popular fictions of that day, which made heroes of highwaymen and burglars, and created a false sympathy for the vicious and criminal.

With this purpose, the author chose for the subject of his story a woman named Catherine Hayes, who was burned at Tyburn, in 1726, for the deliberate murder of her husband, under very revolting circumstances. Mr. Thackeray's aim obviously was to describe the career of this wretched woman and her associates with such fidelity to truth as to exhibit the danger and folly of investing such persons with heroic and romantic qualities.

CATHERINE:

A STORY.

CHAPTER I.

INTRODUCING TO THE READER THE CHIEF PERSONAGES OF THIS NARRATIVE.

AT that famous period of history, when the seventeenth century (after a deal of quarrelling, king-killing, reforming, republicanizing, restoring, re-restoring, play-writing, sermon-writing, Oliver-Cromwellizing, Stuart-izing, and Orangizing, to be sure) had sunk into its grave, giving place to the lusty eighteenth; when Mr. Isaac Newton was a tutor of Trinity, and Mr. Joseph Addison Commissioner of Appeals; when the presiding genius that watched over the destinies of the French nation had played out all the best cards in his hand, and his adversaries began to pour in their trumps; when there were two kings in Spain employed perpetually in running away from one another; when there was a queen in England, with such rogues for Ministers as have never been seen, no, not in our own

day; and a General, of whom it may be severely argued, whether he was the meanest miser or the greatest hero in the world; when Mrs. Masham had not yet put Madam Marlborough's nose out of joint; when people had their ears cut off for writing very meek political pamphlets; and very large full-bottomed wigs were just beginning to be worn with powder; and the face of Louis the Great, as his was handed in to him behind the bed-curtains, was, when issuing thence, observed to look longer, older, and more dismal daily. . . .

About the year One thousand seven hundred and five, that is, in the glorious reign of Queen Anne, there existed certain characters, and befell a series of adventures, which, since they are strictly in accordance with the present fashionable style and taste; since they have been already partly described in the "Newgate Calendar;" since they are (as shall be seen anon) agreeably low, delightfully disgusting, and at the same time eminently pleasing and pathetic, may properly be set down here.

And though it may be said, with some considerable show of reason, that agreeably low and delightfully disgusting characters have already been treated, both copiously and ably, by some eminent writers of the present (and, indeed, of future) ages; though to tread in the footsteps of the immortal FAGIN requires a genius of inordinate stride, and to go a-robbing after the late though deathless TURPIN, the renowned JACK SHEPPARD, or the embryo DUVAL, may be impossible, and not an infringement, but a wasteful indication of ill-will towards the eighth commandment; though it may, on the one hand, be asserted that only vain coxcombs would dare to write on subjects already described by men really and deservedly eminent; on the other hand, that these subjects have been described so fully, that nothing more can be said about them; on the third hand (allowing, for the sake of argument, three hands to one figure of speech), that the public has heard so much of them, as to be quite tired of rogues, thieves, cut-throats, and Newgate altogether;—though all these objections may be urged, and each is excellent, yet we intend to take a few more pages from the "Old Bailey Calendar," to bless the public with one more draught from the Stone Jug:*—yet awhile to listen, hurdle-mounted, and riding down the Oxford Road, to the bland conversation of Jack Ketch, and to hang with him round the neck of his patient, at the end of our and his history. We give the reader fair notice, that we shall tickle him with a few such scenes of villany, throat-cutting, and bodily suffering

* This, as your ladyship is aware, is the polite name for her Majesty's prison of Newgate.

in general, as are not to be found, no, not in —— ; never mind comparisons, for such are odious.

In the year 1705, then, whether it was that the Queen of England did feel seriously alarmed at the notion that a French prince should occupy the Spanish throne; or whether she was tenderly attached to the Emperor of Germany; or whether she was obliged to fight out the quarrel of William of Orange, who made us pay and fight for his Dutch provinces; or whether poor old Louis Quatorze did really frighten her; or whether Sarah Jennings and her husband wanted to make a fight, knowing how much they should gain by it;—whatever the reason was, it was evident that the war was to continue, and there was almost as much soldiering and recruiting, parading, pike and gun-exercising, flag-flying, drum-beating, powder-blazing, and military enthusiasm, as we can all remember in the year 1801, what time the Corsican upstart menaced our shores. A recruiting-party and captain of Cutts's regiment (which had been so mangled at Blenheim the year before,) were now in Warwickshire; and having their depôt at Warwick, the captain and his attendant, the corporal, were used to travel through the country, seeking for heroes to fill up the gaps in Cutts's corps,—and for adventures to pass away the weary time of a country life.

Our Captain Plume and Sergeant Kite (it was at this time, by the way, that those famous recruiting-officers were playing their pranks in Shrewsbury,) were occupied very much in the same manner with Farquhar's heroes. They roamed from Warwick to Stratford, and from Stratford to Birmingham, persuading the swains of Warwickshire to leave the plough for the pike, and despatching, from time to time, small detachments of recruits to extend Marlborough's lines, and to act as food for the hungry cannon at Ramillies and Malplaquet.

Of those two gentlemen who are about to act a very important part in our history, one only was probably a native of Britain,—we say probably, because the individual in question was himself quite uncertain, and, it must be added, entirely indifferent about his birth-place; but speaking the English language, and having been during the course of his life pretty generally engaged in the British service, he had a tolerably fair claim to the majestic title of Briton. His name was Peter Brock, otherwise Corporal Brock, of Lord Cutts's regiment of dragoons; he was of age about fifty-seven (even that point has never been ascertained); in height, about five feet six inches; in weight, nearly thirteen stone; with a chest that the celebrated Leitch himself might envy; an arm, that was like an opera-dancer's leg; a

stomach so elastic that it would accommodate itself to any given or stolen quantity of food; a great aptitude for strong liquors; a considerable skill in singing *chansons de table* of not the most delicate kind; he was a lover of jokes, of which he made many, and passably bad; when pleased, simply coarse, boisterous, and jovial; when angry, a perfect demon: bullying, cursing, storming, fighting, as is sometimes the wont with gentlemen of his cloth and education.

Mr. Brock was strictly, what the Marquis of Rodil styled himself in a proclamation to his soldiers after running away, a *hijo de la guerra*—a child of war. Not seven cities, but one or two regiments, might contend for the honour of giving him birth: for his mother, whose name he took, had acted as camp-follower to a Royalist regiment; had then obeyed the Parliamentarians; died in Scotland when Monk was commanding in that country; and the first appearance of Mr. Brock in a public capacity displayed him as a fifer in the General's own regiment of Coldstreamers, when they marched from Scotland to London, and from a republic at once into a monarchy. Since that period, Brock had been always with the army; he had had, too, some promotion, for he spake of having a command at the battle of the Boyne; though probably (as he never mentioned the fact) upon the losing side. The very year before this narrative commences, he had been one of Mordaunt's forlorn hope at Schellenberg, for which service he was promised a pair of colours; he lost them, however, and was almost shot (but fate did not ordain that his career should close in that way) for drunkenness and insubordination immediately after the battle; but having in some measure reinstated himself by a display of much gallantry at Blenheim, it was found advisable to send him to England for the purpose of recruiting, and remove him altogether from the regiment where his gallantry only rendered the example of his riot more dangerous.

Mr. Brock's commander was a slim young gentleman of twenty-six, about whom there was likewise a history, if one would take the trouble to inquire. He was a Bavarian by birth (his mother being an English lady), and enjoyed along with a dozen other brothers the title of count: eleven of these, of course, were penniless; one or two were priests, one a monk, six or seven in various military services, and the elder at home at Schloss Galgenstein breeding horses, hunting wild boars, swindling tenants, living in a great house with small means; obliged to be sordid at home all the year, to be splendid for a month at the capital, as is the way with many other noblemen. Our young count, Count Gustavus Adolphus Maximilian von Galgenstein, had been in

the service of the French as page to a nobleman ; then of his Majesty's *gardes du corps ;* then a lieutenant and captain in the Bavarian service ; and when, after the battle of Blenheim, two regiments of Germans came over to the winning side, Gustavus Adolphus Maximilian found himself among them ; and at the epoch when this story commences, had enjoyed English pay for a year or more. It is unnecessary to say how he exchanged into his present regiment ; how it appeared that, before her marriage, handsome John Churchill had known the young gentleman's mother, when they were both penniless hangers-on at Charles the Second's court ;—it is, we say, quite useless to repeat all the scandal of which we are perfectly masters, and to trace step by step the events of his history. Here, however, was Gustavus Adolphus, in a small inn, in a small village of Warwickshire, on an autumn evening in the year 1705 ; and at the very moment when this history begins, he and Mr. Brock, his corporal and friend, were seated at a round table before the kitchen-fire while a small groom of the establishment was leading up and down on the village green, before the inn door, two black, glossy, long-tailed, barrel-bellied, thick-flanked, arch-necked, Roman-nosed Flanders horses, which were the property of the two gentlemen now taking their ease at the "Bugle Inn." The two gentlemen were seated at their ease at the inn table, drinking mountain-wine ; and if the reader fancies from the sketch which we have given of their lives, or from his own blindness and belief in the perfectibility of human nature, that the sun of that autumn evening shone upon any two men in county or city, at desk or harvest, at court or at Newgate, drunk or sober, who were greater rascals than Count Gustavus Galgenstein and Corporal Peter Brock, he is egregiously mistaken, and his knowledge of human nature is not worth a fig. If they had not been two prominent scoundrels, what earthly business should we have in detailing their histories ? What would the public care for them ? Who would meddle with dull virtue, humdrum sentiment, or stupid innocence, when vice, agreeable vice, is the only thing which the readers of romances care to hear ?

The little horse-boy, who was leading the two black Flanders horses up and down the green, might have put them in the stable for any good that the horses got by the gentle exercise which they were now taking in the cool evening air, as their owners had not ridden very far or very hard, and there was not a hair turned of their sleek shining coats ; but the lad had been especially ordered so to walk the horses about until he received further commands from the gentlemen reposing in the "Bugle" kitchen ; and the idlers of the village seemed

so pleased with the beasts, and their smart saddles and shining bridles, that it would have been a pity to deprive them of the pleasure of contemplating such an innocent spectacle. Over the Count's horse was thrown a fine red cloth, richly embroidered in yellow worsted, a very large count's coronet and a cipher at the four corners of the covering; and under this might be seen a pair of gorgeous silver stirrups, and above it, a couple of silver-mounted pistols reposing in bearskin holsters; the bit was silver too, and the horse's head was decorated with many smart ribbons. Of the Corporal's steed, suffice it to say, that the ornaments were in brass, as bright, though not perhaps so valuable, as those which decorated the Captain's animal. The boys, who had been at play on the green, first paused and entered into conversation with the horse-boy; then the village matrons followed; and afterwards, sauntering by ones and twos, came the village maidens, who love soldiers as flies love treacle; presently the males began to arrive, and lo! the parson of the parish, taking his evening walk with Mrs. Dobbs, and the four children his offspring, at length joined himself to his flock.

To this audience the little ostler explained that the animals belonged to two gentlemen now reposing at the "Bugle:" one young with gold hair, the other old with grizzled locks; both in red coats; both in jack-boots; putting the house into a bustle, and calling for the best. He then discoursed to some of his own companions regarding the merits of the horses; and the parson, a learned man, explained to the villagers, that one of the travellers must be a count, or at least had a count's horsecloth; pronounced that the stirrups were of real silver, and checked the impetuosity of his son, William Nassau Dobbs, who was for mounting the animals, and who expressed a longing to fire off one of the pistols in the holsters.

As this family discussion was taking place, the gentlemen whose appearance had created so much attention came to the door of the inn, and the elder and stouter was seen to smile at his companion; after which he strolled leisurely over the green, and seemed to examine with much benevolent satisfaction the assemblage of villagers who were staring at him and the quadrupeds.

Mr. Brock, when he saw the parson's band and cassock, took off his beaver reverently, and saluted the divine: "I hope your reverence won't baulk the little fellow," said he; "I think I heard him calling out for a ride, and whether he should like my horse, or his lordship's horse, I am sure it is all one. Don't be afraid, sir! the horses are not tired; we have only come seventy mile to-day, and Prince Eugene

once rode a matter of fifty-two leagues (a hundred and fifty miles), sir, upon that horse, between sunrise and sunset."

"Gracious powers! on which horse?" said Doctor Dobbs, very solemnly.

"On *this* sir,—on mine, Corporal Brock of Cutts's black gelding, 'William of Nassau.' The Prince, sir, gave it me after Blenheim fight, for I had my own legs carried away by a cannon-ball, just as I cut down two of Sauerkrauter's regiment, who had made the Prince prisoner."

"Your own legs, sir!" said the Doctor. "Gracious goodness! this is more and more astonishing!"

"No, no, not my own legs, my horse's I mean, sir; and the Prince gave me 'William of Nassau' that very day."

To this no direct reply was made; but the Doctor looked at Mrs. Dobbs, and Mrs. Dobbs and the rest of the children at her eldest son, who grinned and said, "Isn't it wonderful?" The Corporal to this answered nothing, but, resuming his account, pointed to the other horse and said, "*That* horse, sir—good as mine is—that horse, with the silver stirrups, is his Excellency's horse, Captain Count Maximilian Gustavus Adolphus von Galgenstein, captain of horse and of the Holy Roman empire" (he lifted here his hat with much gravity, and all the crowd, even to the parson, did likewise). "We call him 'George of Denmark,' sir, in compliment to her Majesty's husband: he is Blenheim too, sir; Marshal Tallard rode him on that day, and you know how *he* was taken prisoner by the Count."

"George of Denmark, Marshal Tallard, William of Nassau! this is strange indeed, most wonderful! Why, sir, little are you aware that there are before you, *at this moment*, two other living beings who bear these venerated names! My boys, stand forward! Look here, sir: these children have been respectively named after our late sovereign and the husband of our present Queen."

"And very good names too, sir; ay, and very noble little fellows too; and I propose that, with your reverence and your ladyship's leave, William Nassau here shall ride on George of Denmark, and George of Denmark shall ride on William of Nassau."

When this speech of the Corporal's was made, the whole crowd set up a loyal hurrah; and, with much gravity, the two little boys were lifted up into the saddles; and the Corporal leading one, entrusted the other to the horse-boy, and so together marched stately up and down the green.

The popularity which Mr. Brock gained by this manœuvre was

very great; but with regard to the names of the horses and children, which coincided so extraordinarily, it is but fair to state, that the christening of the quadrupeds had only taken place about two minutes before the dragoon's appearance on the green. For if the fact must be confessed, he, while seated near the inn window, had kept a pretty wistful eye upon all going on without; and the horses marching thus to and fro for the wonderment of the village, were only placards or advertisements for the riders.

There was, besides the boy now occupied with the horses, and the landlord and landlady of the "Bugle Inn," another person connected with that establishment—a very smart, handsome, vain, giggling servant-girl, about the age of sixteen, who went by the familiar name of Cat, and attended upon the gentlemen in the parlour, while the landlady was employed in cooking their supper in the kitchen. This young person had been educated in the village poor-house, and having been pronounced by Doctor Dobbs and the schoolmaster the idlest, dirtiest, and most passionate little minx with whom either had ever had to do, she was, after receiving a very small portion of literary instruction (indeed it must be stated that the young lady did not know her letters), bound apprentice at the age of nine years to Mrs. Score, her relative, and landlady of the "Bugle Inn."

If Miss Cat, or Catherine Hall, was a slattern and a minx, Mrs. Score was a far superior shrew; and for the seven years of her apprenticeship, the girl was completely at her mistress's mercy. Yet though wondrously stingy, jealous, and violent, while her maid was idle and extravagant, and her husband seemed to abet the girl, Mrs. Score put up with the wench's airs, idleness, and caprices, without ever wishing to dismiss her from the "Bugle." The fact is, that Miss Catherine was a great beauty; and for about two years, since her fame had begun to spread, the custom of the inn had also increased vastly. When there was a debate whether the farmers, on their way from market, would take t'other pot, Catherine, by appearing with it, would straightway cause the liquor to be swallowed and paid for; and when the traveller who proposed riding that night and sleeping at Coventry or Birmingham, was asked by Miss Catherine whether he would like a fire in his bedroom, he generally was induced to occupy it, although he might before have vowed to Mrs. Score that he would not for a thousand guineas be absent from home that night. The girl had, too, half-a-dozen lovers in the village; and these were bound in honour to spend their pence at the alehouse she inhabited. O woman, lovely woman! what strong resolves canst thou twist round thy little

finger! what gunpowder passions canst thou kindle with a single sparkle of thine eye! what lies and fribble nonsense canst thou make us listen to, as they were gospel truth or splendid wit! above all, what bad liquor canst thou make us swallow when thou puttest a kiss within the cup—and we are content to call the poison wine!

The mountain-wine at the "Bugle" was, in fact, execrable; but Mrs. Cat, who served it to the two soldiers, made it so agreeable to them, that they found it a passable, even a pleasant task, to swallow the contents of a second bottle. The miracle had been wrought instantaneously on her appearance: for whereas at that very moment the Count was employed in cursing the wine, the landlady, the wine-grower, and the English nation generally, when the young woman entered and (choosing so to interpret the oaths) said, "Coming, your honour; I think your honour called"—Gustavus Adolphus whistled, stared at her very hard, and seeming quite dumb-stricken by her appearance, contented himself by swallowing a whole glass of mountain by way of reply.

Mr. Brock was, however, by no means so confounded as his captain: he was thirty years older than the latter, and in the course of fifty years of military life had learned to look on the most dangerous enemy, or the most beautiful woman, with the like daring, devil-may-care determination to conquer.

"My dear Mary," then said that gentleman, "his honour is a lord; as good as a lord, that is; for all he allows such humble fellows as I am to drink with him."

Catherine dropped a low curtsey, and said, "Well, I don't know if you are joking a poor country girl, as all you soldier gentlemen do; but his honour *looks* like a lord: though I never see one, to be sure."

"Then," said the Captain, gathering courage, "how do you know I look like one, pretty Mary?"

"Pretty Catherine: I mean Catherine, if you please, sir."

Here Mr. Brock burst into a roar of laughter, and shouting with many oaths that she was right at first, invited her to give him what he called a buss.

Pretty Catherine turned away from him at this request, and muttered something about "Keep your distance, low fellow! buss indeed! poor country girl," &c. &c., placing herself, as if for protection, on the side of the Captain. That gentleman looked also very angry; but whether at the sight of innocence so outraged, or the insolence of the Corporal for daring to help himself first, we cannot say. "Hark ye, Mr. Brock," he cried very fiercely, "I will suffer no such liberties

in my presence: remember, it is only my condescension which permits you to share my bottle in this way; take care I don't give you instead a taste of my cane." So saying, he, in a protecting manner, placed one hand round Mrs. Catherine's waist, holding the other clenched very near to the Corporal's nose.

Mrs. Catherine, for *her* share of this action of the Count's, dropped another curtsey, and said, "Thank you, my lord." But Galgenstein's threat did not appear to make any impression on Mr. Brock, as indeed there was no reason that it should; for the Corporal, at a combat of fisticuffs, could have pounded his commander into a jelly in ten minutes: so he contented himself by saying, "Well, noble Captain, there's no harm done; it *is* an honour for poor old Peter Brock to be at table with you, and I *am* sorry sure enough."

"In truth, Peter, I believe thou art; thou hast good reason, eh, Peter? But never fear, man; had I struck thee, I never would have hurt thee."

"I *know* you would not," replied Brock, laying his hand on his heart with much gravity; and so peace was made, and healths were drunk. Miss Catherine condescended to put her lips to the Captain's glass; who swore that the wine was thus converted into nectar; and although the girl had not previously heard of that liquor, she received the compliment as a compliment, and smiled and simpered in return.

The poor thing had never before seen anybody so handsome, or so finely dressed as the Count; and, in the simplicity of her coquetry, allowed her satisfaction to be quite visible. Nothing could be more clumsy than the gentleman's mode of complimenting her; but for this, perhaps, his speeches were more effective than others more delicate would have been; and though she said to each, "Oh, now, my lord," and "La, Captain, how can you flatter one so?" and "Your honour's laughing at me," and made such polite speeches as are used on these occasions, it was manifest from the flutter and blush, and the grin of satisfaction which lighted up the buxom features of the little country beauty, that the Count's first operations had been highly successful. When following up his attack, he produced from his neck a small locket (which had been given him by a Dutch lady at the Brill), and begged Miss Catherine to wear it for his sake, and chucked her under the chin and called her his little rosebud, it was pretty clear how things would go: anybody who could see the expression of Mr. Brock's countenance at this event might judge of the progress of the irresistible High-Dutch conqueror.

Being of a very vain, communicative turn, our fair barmaid gave her two companions not only a pretty long account of herself, but of

many other persons in the village, whom she could perceive from the

window opposite to which she stood. "Yes, your honour," said she—"my lord, I mean; sixteen last March, though there's a many girl in the village that at my age is quite chits. There's Polly Randall now, that red-haired girl along with Thomas Curtis: she's seventeen if she's a day, though he is the very first sweetheart she has had. Well, as I am saying, I was bred up here in the village—father and mother died very young, and I was left a poor orphan—well, bless us! if Thomas haven't kissed her!—to the care of Mrs. Score, my aunt, who has been a mother to me—a stepmother, you know;—and I've been to Stratford fair, and to Warwick many a time; and there's two people who have offered to marry me, and ever so many who want to, and I won't have none—only a gentleman, as I've always said; not a poor clodpole, like Tom there with the red waistcoat (he was one that asked me), nor a drunken fellow like Sam Blacksmith yonder, him whose wife has got the black eye, but a real gentleman, like——"

"Like whom, my dear?" said the Captain, encouraged.

"La, sir, how can you? why, like our squire, Sir John, who rides in such a mortal fine gold coach; or, at least, like the parson, Doctor Dobbs—that's he in the black gown, walking with Madam Dobbs in red."

"And are those his children?"

"Yes: two girls and two boys; and only think, he calls one William Nassau, and one George Denmark—isn't it odd?" And from the parson, Mrs. Catherine went on to speak of several humble personages of the village community, who, as they are not necessary to our story, need not be described at full length. It was when, from the window, Corporal Brock saw the altercation between the worthy divine and his son, respecting the latter's ride, that he judged it a fitting time to step out on the green, and to bestow on the two horses those famous historical names which we have just heard applied to them.

Mr. Brock's diplomacy was, as we have stated, quite successful; for, when the parson's boys had ridden and retired along with their mamma and papa, other young gentlemen of humbler rank in the village were placed upon "George of Denmark" and "William of Nassau;" the Corporal joking and laughing with all the grown-up people. The women, in spite of Mr. Brock's age, his red nose, and a certain squint of his eye, vowed the Corporal was a jewel of a man; and among the men his popularity was equally great.

"How much dost thee get, Thomas Clodpole?" said Mr. Brock to a countryman (he was the man whom Mrs. Catherine had described

as her suitor), who had laughed loudest at some of his jokes: "how much dost thee get for a week's work, now?"

Mr. Clodpole, whose name was really Bullock, stated that his wages amounted to "three shillings and a puddn."

"Three shillings and a puddn!—monstrous!—and for this you toil like a galley-slave, as I have seen them in Turkey and America,—ay, gentlemen, and in the country of Prester John! You shiver out of bed on icy winter mornings, to break the ice for Ball and Dapple to drink."

"Yes, indeed," said the person addressed, who seemed astounded at the extent of the Corporal's information.

"Or you clean pigsty, and take dung down to meadow; or you act watchdog and tend sheep; or you sweep a scythe over a great field of grass; and when the sun has scorched the eyes out of your head, and sweated the flesh off your bones, and well-nigh fried the soul out of your body, you go home, to what?—three shillings a week and a puddn! Do you get pudding every day?"

"No; only Sundays."

"Do you get money enough?"

"No, sure."

"Do you get beer enough?"

"Oh no, NEVER!" said Mr. Bullock quite resolutely.

"Worthy Clodpole, give us thy hand: it shall have beer enough this day, or my name's not Corporal Brock. Here's the money, boy! there are twenty pieces in this purse: and how do you think I got 'em? and how do you think I shall get others when these are gone?—by serving her sacred Majesty to be sure: long life to her, and down with the French King!"

Bullock, a few of the men, and two or three of the boys, piped out an hurrah, in compliment to this speech of the Corporal's: but it was remarked that the greater part of the crowd drew back—the women whispering ominously to them and looking at the Corporal.

"I see, ladies, what it is," said he. "You are frightened, and think I am a crimp come to steal your sweethearts away. What! call Peter Brock a double-dealer? I tell you what, boys, Jack Churchill himself has shaken this hand, and drunk a pot with me: do you think he'd shake hands with a rogue? Here's Tummas Clodpole has never had beer enough, and here am I will stand treat to him and any other gentleman: am I good enough company for him? I have money, look you, and like to spend it: what should *I* be doing dirty actions for—hay, Tummas?"

A satisfactory reply to this query was not, of course, expected by the Corporal nor uttered by Mr. Bullock; and the end of the dispute was, that he and three or four of the rustic bystanders were quite convinced of the good intentions of their new friend, and accompanied him back to the "Bugle," to regale upon the promised beer. Among the Corporal's guests was one young fellow whose dress would show that he was somewhat better to do in the world than Clodpole and the rest of the sunburnt ragged troop, who were marching towards the alehouse. This man was the only one of his hearers who, perhaps, was sceptical as to the truth of his stories; but as soon as Bullock accepted the invitation to drink, John Hayes, the carpenter (for such was his name and profession), said, "Well, Thomas, if thou goest, I will go to."

"I know thee wilt," said Thomas: "thou'lt goo anywhere Catty Hall is, provided thou canst goo for nothing."

"Nay, I have a penny to spend as good as the Corporal here."

"A penny to *keep*, you mean: for all your love for the lass at the 'Bugle,' did thee ever spend a shilling in the house? Thee wouldn't go now, but that I am going too, and the Captain here stands treat."

"Come, come, gentlemen, no quarrelling," said Mr. Brock. "If this pretty fellow will join us, amen say I: there's lots of liquor, and plenty of money to pay the score. Comrade Tummas, give us thy arm. Mr. Hayes, you're a hearty cock, I make no doubt, and all such are welcome. Come along, my gentleman farmers, Mr. Brock shall have the honour to pay for you all." And with this, Corporal Brock, accompanied by Messrs. Hayes, Bullock, Blacksmith, Baker's-boy, Butcher, and one or two others, adjourned to the inn; the horses being, at the same time, conducted to the stable.

Although we have, in this quiet way, and without any flourishing of trumpets, or beginning of chapters, introduced Mr. Hayes to the public; and although, at first sight, a sneaking carpenter's boy may seem hardly worthy of the notice of an intelligent reader, who looks for a good cut-throat or highwayman for a hero, or a pickpocket at the very least: this gentleman's words and actions should be carefully studied by the public, as he is destined to appear before them under very polite and curious circumstances during the course of this history. The speech of the rustic Juvenal, Mr. Clodpole, had seemed to infer that Hayes was at once careful of his money and a warm admirer of Mrs. Catherine of the "Bugle:" and both the charges were perfectly true. Hayes's father was reported to be a man of some substance;

and young John, who was performing his apprenticeship in the village, did not fail to talk very big of his pretensions to fortune— of his entering, at the close of his indentures, into partnership with his father— and of the comfortable farm and house over which Mrs. John Hayes, whoever she might be, would one day preside. Thus, next to the barber and butcher, and above even his own master, Mr. Hayes took rank in the village : and it must not be concealed that his representation of wealth had made some impression upon Mrs. Hall, towards whom the young gentleman had cast the eyes of affection. If he had been tolerably well-looking, and not pale, rickety, and feeble as he was ; if even he had been ugly, but withal a man of spirit, it is probable the girl's kindness for him would have been much more decided. But he was a poor weak creature, not to compare with honest Thomas Bullock, by at least nine inches ; and so notoriously timid, selfish, and stingy, that there was a kind of shame in receiving his addresses openly ; and what encouragement Mrs. Catherine gave him could only be in secret.

But no mortal is wise at all times : and the fact was, that Hayes, who cared for himself intensely, had set his heart upon winning Catherine ; and loved her with a desperate, greedy eagerness and desire of possession, which makes passions for women often so fierce and unreasonable among very cold and selfish men. His parents (whose frugality he had inherited) had tried in vain to wean him from this passion, and had made many fruitless attempts to engage him with women who possessed money and desired husbands : but Hayes was, for a wonder, quite proof against their attractions ; and, though quite ready to acknowledge the absurdity of his love for a penniless ale-house servant-girl, nevertheless persisted in it doggedly. "I know I'm a fool," said he ; "and what's more, the girl does not care for me ; but marry her I must, or I think I shall just die : and marry her I will." For very much to the credit of Miss Catherine's modesty, she had declared that marriage was with her a *sine quâ non*, and had dismissed, with the loudest scorn and indignation, all propositions of a less proper nature.

Poor Thomas Bullock was another of her admirers, and had offered to marry her ; but three shillings a week and a puddn was not to the girl's taste, and Thomas had been scornfully rejected. Hayes had also made her a direct proposal. Catherine did not say no : she was too prudent : but she was young and could wait ; she did not care for Mr. Hayes *yet* enough to marry him—(it did not seem, indeed, in the young woman's nature to care for anybody)—and she gave her

adorer flatteringly to understand that, if nobody better appeared in the course of a few years, she might be induced to become Mrs. Hayes. It was a dismal prospect for the poor fellow to live upon the hope of being one day Mrs. Catherine's *pis-aller*.

In the meantime she considered herself free as the wind, and permitted herself all the innocent gaieties which that "chartered libertine," a coquette, can take. She flirted with all the bachelors, widowers, and married men, in a manner which did extraordinary credit to her years: and let not the reader fancy such pastimes unnatural at her early age. The ladies—heaven bless them!—are, as a general rule, coquettes from babyhood upwards. Little *she*'s of three years old play little airs and graces upon small heroes of five; simpering misses of nine make attacks upon young gentlemen of twelve; and at sixteen, a well-grown girl, under encouraging circumstances,—say, she is pretty, in a family of ugly elder sisters, or an only child and heiress, or a humble wench at a country inn, like our fair Catherine—is at the very pink and prime of her coquetry: they will jilt you at that age with an ease and arch infantine simplicity that never can be surpassed in maturer years.

Miss Catherine, then, was a *franche coquette*, and Mr. John Hayes was miserable. His life was passed in a storm of mean passions and bitter jealousies, and desperate attacks upon the indifference-rock of Mrs. Catherine's heart, which not all his tempest of love could beat down. O cruel, cruel pangs of love unrequited! Mean rogues feel them as well as great heroes. Lives there the man in Europe who has not felt them many times?—who has not knelt, and fawned, and supplicated, and wept, and cursed, and raved, all in vain; and passed long wakeful nights with ghosts of dead hopes for company; shadows of buried remembrances that glide out of their graves of nights, and whisper, "We are dead now, but we *were* once; and we made you happy, and we come now to mock you:—despair, O lover, despair, and die?"—O cruel pangs!—dismal nights!—Now a sly demon creeps under your nightcap, and drops into your ear those soft, hope-breathing, sweet words, uttered on the well-remembered evening: there, in the drawer of your dressing-table (along with the razors, and Macassar oil), lies the dead flower that Lady Amelia Wilhelmina wore in her bosom on the night of a certain ball—the corpse of a glorious hope that seemed once as if it would live for ever, so strong was it, so full of joy and sunshine: there, in your writing-desk, among a crowd of unpaid bills, is the dirty scrap of paper, thimble-sealed, which came in company with a pair of muffetees of her knitting (she

was a butcher's daughter, and did all she could, poor thing !), begging "you would ware them at collidge, and think of her who"—married a public-house three weeks afterwards, and cares for you no more now than she does for the pot-boy. But why multiply instances, or seek to depict the agony of poor, mean-spirited John Hayes? No mistake can be greater than that of fancying such great emotions of love are only felt by virtuous or exalted men: depend upon it, Love, like Death, plays havoc among the *pauperum tabernas*, and sports with rich and poor, wicked and virtuous, alike. I have often fancied, for instance, on seeing the haggard, pale young old-clothesman, who wakes the echoes of our street with his nasal cry of "Clo'!"—I have often, I said, fancied that, besides the load of exuvial coats and breeches under which he staggers, there is another weight on him—an *atrior cura* at his tail—and while his unshorn lips and nose together are performing that mocking, boisterous, Jack-indifferent cry of "Clo', clo'!" who knows what woful utterances are crying from the heart within? There he is chaffering with the footman at No. 7, about an old dressing-gown; you think his whole soul is bent only on the contest about the garment. Psha! there is, perhaps, some faithless girl in Holywell Street who fills up his heart; and that desultory Jew-boy is a peripatetic hell! Take another instance:—take the man in the beef-shop in Saint Martin's Court. There he is, to all appearances quite calm: before the same round of beef—from morning till sundown—for hundreds of years very likely. Perhaps when the shutters are closed, and all the world tired and silent, there is HE silent, but untired—cutting, cutting, cutting. You enter, you get your meat to your liking, you depart; and, quite unmoved, on, on he goes, reaping ceaselessly the Great Harvest of Beef. You would fancy that if Passion ever failed to conquer, it had in vain assailed the calm bosom of THAT MAN. I doubt it, and would give much to know his history. Who knows what furious Ætna-flames are raging underneath the surface of that calm flesh-mountain—who can tell me that that calmness itself is not DESPAIR?

* * * * *

The reader, if he does not now understand why it was that Mr. Hayes agreed to drink the Corporal's proffered beer, had better just read the foregoing remarks over again, and if he does not understand *then*, why, small praise to his brains. Hayes could not bear that Mr. Bullock should have a chance of seeing, and perhaps making love to Mrs. Catherine in his absence; and though the young woman never diminished her coquetries, but, on the contrary, rather increased

them in his presence, it was still a kind of dismal satisfaction to be miserable in her company.

On this occasion, the disconsolate lover could be wretched to his heart's content; for Catherine had not a word or a look for him, but bestowed all her smiles upon the handsome stranger who owned the black horse. As for poor Tummas Bullock, his passion was never violent; and he was content in the present instance to sigh and drink beer. He sighed and drank, sighed and drank, and drank again, until he had swallowed so much of the Corporal's liquor, as to be induced to accept a guinea from his purse also; and found himself, on returning to reason and sobriety, a soldier of Queen Anne's.

But oh! fancy the agonies of Mr. Hayes when, seated with the Corporal's friends at one end of the kitchen, he saw the Captain at the place of honour, and the smiles which the fair maid bestowed upon him; when, as she lightly whisked past him with the Captain's supper, she, pointing to the locket that once reposed on the breast of the Dutch lady at the Brill, looked archly on Hayes and said, "See, John, what his lordship has given me;" and when John's face became green and purple with rage and jealousy, Mrs. Catherine laughed ten times louder, and cried, "Coming, my lord," in a voice of shrill triumph, that bored through the soul of Mr. John Hayes and left him gasping for breath.

On Catherine's other lover, Mr. Thomas, this coquetry had no effect: he, and two comrades of his, had by this time quite fallen under the spell of the Corporal; and hope, glory, strong beer, Prince Eugene, pair of colours, more strong beer, her blessed Majesty, plenty more strong beer, and such subjects, martial and bacchic, whirled through their dizzy brains at a railroad pace.

And now, if there had been a couple of experienced reporters present at the "Bugle Inn," they might have taken down a conversation on love and war—the two themes discussed by the two parties occupying the kitchen—which, as the parts were sung together, duet-wise, formed together some very curious harmonies. Thus, while the Captain was whispering the softest nothings, the Corporal was shouting the fiercest combats of the war; and, like the gentleman at Penelope's table, on it *exiguo pinxit prœlia tota* bero. For example:—

Captain.—"What do you say to a silver trimming, pretty Catherine? Don't you think a scarlet riding-cloak, handsomely laced, would become you wonderfully well?—and a grey hat with a blue feather—and a pretty nag to ride on—and all the soldiers to present arms as you pass, and say, 'There goes the Captain's lady?' What do you think of

a side-box at 'Lincoln's Inn' playhouse, or of standing up to a minuet with my Lord Marquis at ——?"

Corporal.—"The ball, sir, ran right up his elbow, and was found the next day by Surgeon Splinter of ours,—where do you think, sir?—upon my honour as a gentleman it came out of the nape of his——"

Captain.—"Necklace—and a sweet pair of diamond earrings, mayhap—and a little shower of patches, which ornament a lady's face wondrously—and a leetle rouge,—though, egad! such peach-cheeks as yours don't want it;—fie! Mrs. Catherine, I should think the birds must come and peck at them as if they were fruit——"

Corporal.—"Over the wall; and three-and-twenty of our fellows jumped after me. By the Pope of Rome, friend Tummas, that was a day!—Had you seen how the Mounseers looked when four-and-twenty rampaging he-devils, sword and pistol, cut and thrust, pell-mell came tumbling into the redoubt! Why, sir, we left in three minutes as many artillerymen's heads as there were cannon-balls. It was, 'Ah. sacré!' 'D—— you, take that!' 'O mon Dieu!' 'Run him through.' 'Ventrebleu!' and it *was* ventrebleu with him, I warrant you: for *bleu*, in the French language, means 'through;' and *ventre*—why, you see, ventre means——"

Captain.—"Waists, which are worn now excessive long;—and for the hoops, if you *could* but see them—stap my vitals, my dear, but there was a lady at Warwick's Assembly (she came in one of my lord's coaches) who had a hoop as big as a tent: you might have dined under it comfortably;—ha! ha! 'pon my faith, now——"

Corporal.—"And there we found the Duke of Marlborough seated along with Marshal Tallard, who was endeavouring to drown his sorrow over a cup of Johannisberger wine; and a good drink too, my lads, only not to compare to Warwick beer. 'Who was the man who has done this?' said our noble General. I stepped up. 'How many heads was it,' says he, 'that you cut off?' 'Nineteen,' says I, 'besides wounding several.' When he heard it (Mr. Hayes, you don't drink) I'm blest if he didn't burst into tears! 'Noble, noble fellow,' says he. 'Marshal, you must excuse me, if I am pleased to hear of the destruction of your countrymen. Noble, noble fellow!—here's a hundred guineas for you.' Which sum he placed in my hand. 'Nay,' says the Marshal, 'the man has done his duty:' and, pulling out a magnificent gold diamond-hilted snuff-box, he gave me——"

Mr. Bullock.—"What, a goold snuff-box? Wauns, but thee *wast* in luck, Corporal!"——

Corporal.—"No, not the snuff-box, but—*a pinch of snuff*,—ha!

ha!—run me through the body if he didn't! Could you but have seen the smile on Jack Churchill's grave face at this piece of generosity! So, beckoning Colonel Cadogan up to him, he pinched his ear and whispered——"

Captain.—"'May I have the honour to dance a minuet with your ladyship?' The whole room was in titters at Jack's blunder; for, as you know very well, poor Lady Susan *has a wooden leg*. Ha! ha! fancy a minuet and a wooden leg, hey, my dear?——

Mrs. Catherine.—"Giggle—giggle—giggle: he! he! he! Oh, Captain, you rogue, you——"

Second table.—"Haw! haw! haw! Well, you *be* a foony mon, sergeant, zure enoff."

* * * *

This little specimen of the conversation must be sufficient. It will show pretty clearly that each of the two military commanders was conducting his operations with perfect success. Three of the detachment of five attacked by the Corporal surrendered to him: Mr. Bullock, namely, who gave in at a very early stage of the evening, and ignominiously laid down his arms under the table, after standing not more than a dozen volleys of beer; Mr. Blacksmith's boy, and a labourer whose name we have not been able to learn. Mr. Butcher himself was on the point of yielding, when he was rescued by the furious charge of a detachment that marched to his relief: his wife namely, who, with two squalling children, rushed into the "Bugle," boxed Butcher's ears, and kept up such a tremendous fire of oaths and screams upon the Corporal, that he was obliged to retreat. Fixing then her claws into Mr. Butcher's hair, she proceeded to drag him out of the premises; and thus Mr. Brock was overcome. His attack upon John Hayes was a still greater failure; for that young man seemed to be invincible by drink, if not by love: and at the end of the drinking-bout was a great deal more cool than the Corporal himself; to whom he wished a very polite good-evening, as calmly he took his hat to depart. He turned to look at Catherine, to be sure, and then he was not quite so calm: but Catherine did not give any reply to his good-night. She was seated at the Captain's table playing at cribbage with him; and though Count Gustavus Maximilian lost every game, he won more than he lost,—sly fellow!—and Mrs. Catherine was no match for him.

It is to be presumed that Hayes gave some information to Mrs. Score, the landlady: for, on leaving the kitchen, he was seen to linger for a moment in the bar; and very soon after Mrs. Catherine

was called away from her attendance on the Count, who, when he asked for a sack and toast, was furnished with those articles by the landlady herself: and, during the half-hour in which he was employed in consuming this drink, Monsieur de Galgenstein looked very much disturbed and out of humour, and cast his eyes to the door perpetually; but no Catherine came. At last, very sulkily, he desired to be shown to bed, and walked as well as he could (for, to say truth, the noble Count was by this time somewhat unsteady on his legs) to his chamber. It was Mrs. Score who showed him to it, and closed the curtains, and pointed triumphantly to the whiteness of the sheets.

"It's a very comfortable room," said she, "though not the best in the house; which belong of right to your lordship's worship; but our best room has two beds, and Mr. Corporal is in that, locked and double-locked, with his three tipsy recruits. But your honour will find this here bed comfortable and well-aired; I've slept in it myself this eighteen years."

"What, my good woman, you are going to sit up, eh? It's cruel hard on you, madam."

"Sit up, my lord? bless you, no! I shall have half of our Cat's bed; as I always do when there's company." And with this Mrs. Score curtseyed and retired.

* * * * *

Very early the next morning the active landlady and her bustling attendant had prepared the ale and bacon for the Corporal and his three converts, and had set a nice white cloth for the Captain's breakfast. The young blacksmith did not eat with much satisfaction; but Mr. Bullock and his friend betrayed no sign of discontent, except such as may be consequent upon an evening's carouse. They walked very contentedly to be registered before Doctor Dobbs, who was also justice of the peace, and went in search of their slender bundles, and took leave of their few acquaintances without much regret: for the gentlemen had been bred in the workhouse, and had not, therefore, a large circle of friends.

It wanted only an hour of noon, and the noble Count had not descended. The men were waiting for him, and spent much of the Queen's money (earned by the sale of their bodies overnight) while thus expecting him. Perhaps Mrs. Catherine expected him too, for she had offered many times to run up—with my lord's boots—with the hot water—to show Mr. Brock the way; who sometimes condescended to officiate as barber. But on all these occasions Mrs.

Score had prevented her; not scolding, but with much gentleness and smiling. At last, more gentle and smiling than ever, she came downstairs and said, "Catherine darling, his honour the Count is mighty hungry this morning, and vows he could pick the wing of a fowl. Run down, child, to Farmer Brigg's and get one: pluck it before you bring it, you know, and we will make his lordship a pretty breakfast."

Catherine took up her basket, and away she went by the back-yard, through the stables. There she heard the little horse-boy whistling and hissing after the manner of horse-boys; and there she learned that Mrs. Score had been inventing an ingenious story to have her out of the way. The ostler said he was just going to lead the two horses round to the door. The Corporal had been, and they were about to start on the instant for Stratford.

The fact was that Count Gustavus Adolphus, far from wishing to pick the wing of a fowl, had risen with a horror and loathing for everything in the shape of food, and for any liquor stronger than small beer. Of this he had drunk a cup, and said he should ride immediately to Stratford; and when, on ordering his horses, he had asked politely of the landlady "why the d—— *she* always came up, and why she did not send the girl," Mrs. Score informed the Count that her Catherine was gone out for a walk along with the young man to whom she was to be married, and would not be visible that day. On hearing this the Captain ordered his horses that moment, and abused the wine, the bed, the house, the landlady, and everything connected with the "Bugle Inn."

Out the horses came: the little boys of the village gathered round; the recruits, with bunches of ribands in their beavers, appeared presently; Corporal Brock came swaggering out, and, slapping the pleased blacksmith on the back, bade him mount his horse; while the boys hurrah'd. Then the Captain came out, gloomy and majestic; to him Mr. Brock made a military salute, which clumsily, and with much grinning, the recruits imitated. "I shall walk on with these brave fellows, your honour, and meet you at Stratford," said the Corporal. "Good," said the Captain, as he mounted. The landlady curtseyed; the children hurrah'd more; the little horse-boy, who held the bridle with one hand and the stirrup with the other, and expected a crown-piece from such a noble gentleman, got only a kick and a curse, as Count von Galgenstein shouted, "D—— you all, get out of the way!" and galloped off; and John Hayes, who had been sneaking about the inn all the

morning, felt a weight off his heart when he saw the Captain ride off alone.

* * * * *

O foolish Mrs. Score! O dolt of a John Hayes! If the landlady had allowed the Captain and the maid to have their way, and meet but for a minute before recruits, sergeant, and all, it is probable that no harm would have been done, and that this history would never have been written.

When Count von Galgenstein had ridden half a mile on the Stratford road, looking as black and dismal as Napoleon galloping from the romantic village of Waterloo, he espied, a few score yards onwards, at the turn of the road, a certain object which caused him to check his horse suddenly, brought a tingling red into his cheeks, and made his heart to go thump—thump! against his side. A young lass was sauntering slowly along the footpath, with a basket swinging from one hand, and a bunch of hedge-flowers in the other. She stopped once or twice to add a fresh one to her nosegay, and might have seen him, the Captain thought; but no, she never looked directly towards him, and still walked on. Sweet innocent! she was singing as if none were near; her voice went soaring up to the clear sky, and the Captain put his horse on the grass, that the sound of the hoofs might not disturb the music.

"When the kine had given a pailful,
And the sheep came bleating home,
Poll, who knew it would be healthful,
Went a-walking out with Tom.
Hand in hand, sir, on the land, sir,
As they walked to and fro,
Tom made jolly love to Polly,
But was answered no, no, no."

The Captain had put his horse on the grass, that the sound of his hoofs might not disturb the music; and now he pushed its head on to the bank, where straightway "George of Denmark" began chewing of such a salad as grew there. And now the Captain slid off stealthily; and smiling comically, and hitching up his great jack-boots, and moving forward with a jerking tiptoe step, he, just as she was trilling the last *o-o-o* of the last *no* in the above poem of Tom D'Urfey, came up to her, and touching her lightly on the waist, said,

"My dear, your very humble servant."

Mrs. Catherine (you know you have found her out long ago!) gave

a scream and a start, and would have turned pale if she could. As it was, she only shook all over, and said,

"Oh, sir, how you *did* frighten me!"

"Frighten you, my rosebud! why, run me through, I'd die rather than frighten you. Gad, child, tell me now, am I so *very* frightful?"

"Oh, no, your honour, I didn't mean that; only I wasn't thinking to meet you here, or that you would ride so early at all: for, if you please, sir, I was going to fetch a chicken for your lordship's breakfast, as my mistress said you would like one; and I thought, instead of going to Farmer Brigg's, down Birmingham way, as she told me, I'd go to Farmer Bird's, where the chickens is better, sir—my lord, I mean."

"Said I'd like a chicken for breakfast, the old cat! why, I told her I would not eat a morsel to save me—I was so dru—, I mean I ate such a good supper last night—and I bade her to send me a pot of small beer, and to tell you to bring it; and the wretch said you were gone out with your sweetheart——"

"What! John Hayes, the creature? Oh, what a naughty story-telling woman!"

"—You had walked out with your sweetheart, and I was not to see you any more; and I was mad with rage, and ready to kill myself; I was, my dear."

"Oh, sir! pray, *pray* don't."

"For your sake, my sweet angel?"

"Yes, for my sake, if such a poor girl as me can persuade noble gentlemen."

"Well, then, for *your* sake, I won't: no, I'll live; but why live? Hell and fury, if I do live I'm miserable without you; I am,—you know I am,—you adorable, beautiful, cruel, wicked Catherine!"

Catherine's reply to this was "La, bless me! I do believe your horse is running away." And so he was! for having finished his meal in the hedge, he first looked towards his master and paused, as it were, irresolutely; then, by a sudden impulse, flinging up his tail and his hind legs, he scampered down the road.

Mrs. Hall ran lightly after the horse, and the Captain after Mrs. Hall; and the horse ran quicker and quicker every moment, and might have led them a long chase—when lo! debouching from a twist in the road, came the detachment of cavalry and infantry under Mr. Brock. The moment he was out of sight of the village, that gentleman had desired the blacksmith to dismount, and had himself

jumped into the saddle, maintaining the subordination of his army by drawing a pistol and swearing that he would blow out the brains of any person who attempted to run. When the Captain's horse came near the detachment he paused, and suffered himself to be caught by Tummas Bullock, who held him until the owner and Mrs. Catherine came up.

Mr. Bullock looked comically grave when he saw the pair; but the Corporal graciously saluted Mrs. Catherine, and said it was a fine day for walking.

"La, sir, and so it is," said she, panting in a very pretty and distressing way, "but not for *running*. I do protest—ha!—and vow that I really can scarcely stand. I'm so tired of running after that naughty, naughty horse!"

"How do, Cattern?" said Thomas. "Zee, I be going a zouldiering because thee wouldn't have me." And here Mr. Bullock grinned. Mrs. Catherine made no sort of reply, but protested once more she should die of running. If the truth were told, she was somewhat vexed at the arrival of the Corporal's detachment, and had had very serious thoughts of finding herself quite tired just as he came in sight.

A sudden thought brought a smile of bright satisfaction in the Captain's eyes. He mounted the horse which Tummas still held. "*Tired*, Mrs. Catherine," said he, "and for my sake? By heavens, you shan't walk a step farther! No, you shall ride back with a guard of honour! Back to the village, gentlemen!—rightabout face! Show those fellows, Corporal, how to rightabout face. Now, my dear, mount behind me on Snowball; he's easy as a sedan. Put your dear little foot on the toe of my boot. There now,—up!—jump! hurrah!"

"*That's* not the way, Captain," shouted out Thomas, still holding on to the rein as the horse began to move. "Thee woan't goo with him, will thee, Catty?"

But Mrs. Catherine, though she turned away her head, never let go her hold round the Captain's waist; and he, swearing a dreadful oath at Thomas, struck him across the face and hands with his riding-whip. The poor fellow, who at the first cut still held on to the rein, dropped it at the second, and as the pair galloped off, sat down on the roadside and fairly began to weep.

"*March*, you dog!" shouted out the Corporal a minute after. And so he did: and when next he saw Mrs. Catherine she *was* the Captain's lady sure enough, and wore a grey hat with a blue feather, and red riding-coat trimmed with silver-lace. But Thomas was then

on a bare-backed horse, which Corporal Brock was flanking round a ring, and he was so occupied looking between his horse's ears that he had no time to cry then, and at length got the better of his attachment.

This being a good opportunity for closing Chapter I., we ought, perhaps, to make some apologies to the public for introducing them to characters that are so utterly worthless; as we confess all our heroes, with the exception of Mr. Bullock, to be. In this we have consulted nature and history, rather than the prevailing taste and the general manner of authors. The amusing novel of "Ernest Maltravers," for instance, opens with a seduction; but then it is performed by people of the strictest virtue on both sides: and there is so much religion and philosophy in the heart of the seducer, so much tender innocence in the soul of the seduced, that—bless the little dears!—their very peccadilloes make one interested in them; and their naughtiness becomes quite sacred, so deliciously is it described. Now, if we *are* to be interested by rascally actions, let us have them with plain faces, and let them be performed, not by virtuous philosophers, but by rascals. Another clever class of novelists adopt the contrary system, and create interest by making their rascals perform virtuous actions. Against these popular plans we here solemnly appeal. We say, let your rogues in novels act like rogues, and your honest men like honest men; don't let us have any juggling and thimblerigging with virtue and vice, so that, at the end of three volumes, the bewildered reader shall not know which is which; don't let us find ourselves kindling at the generous qualities of thieves, and sympathizing with the rascalities of noble hearts. For our own part, we know what the public likes, and have chosen rogues for our characters, and have taken a story from the "Newgate Calendar," which we hope to follow out to edification. Among the rogues, at least, we will have nothing that shall be mistaken for virtues. And if the British public (after calling for three or four editions) shall give up, not only our rascals, but the rascals of all other authors, we shall be content:—we shall apply to Government for a pension, and think that our duty is done.

CHAPTER II.

IN WHICH ARE DEPICTED THE PLEASURES OF A SENTIMENTAL ATTACHMENT.

IT will not be necessary, for the purpose of this history, to follow out very closely all the adventures which occurred to Mrs. Catherine from the period when she quitted the "Bugle" and became the Captain's lady; for, although it would be just as easy to show as not, that the young woman, by following the man of her heart, had only yielded to an innocent impulse, and by remaining with him for a certain period, had proved the depth and strength of her affection for him,—although we might make very tender and eloquent apologies for the error of both parties, the reader might possibly be disgusted at such descriptions and such arguments: which, besides, are already done to his hand in the novel of "Ernest Maltravers" before mentioned.

From the gentleman's manner towards Mrs. Catherine, and from his brilliant and immediate success, the reader will doubtless have concluded, in the first place, that Gustavus Adolphus had not a very violent affection for Mrs. Cat; in the second place, that he was a professional lady-killer, and therefore likely at some period to resume his profession; thirdly, and to conclude, that a connexion so begun, must, in the nature of things, be likely to end speedily.

And so, to do the Count justice, it would, if he had been allowed to follow his own inclination entirely; for (as many young gentlemen will, and yet no praise to them) in about a week he began to be

indifferent, in a month to be weary, in two months to be angry, in three to proceed to blows and curses; and, in short, to repent most bitterly the hour when he had ever been induced to present Mrs. Catherine the toe of his boot, for the purpose of lifting her on to his horse.

"Egad!" said he to the Corporal one day, when confiding his griefs to Mr. Brock, "I wish my toe had been cut off before ever it served as a ladder to this little vixen."

"Or perhaps your honour would wish to kick her downstairs with it?" delicately suggested Mr. Brock.

"Kick her! why, the wench would hold so fast by the banisters that I *could* not kick her down, Mr. Brock. To tell you a bit of a secret, I *have* tried as much—not to kick her—no, no, not kick her, certainly: that's ungentlemanly—but to *induce* her to go back to that cursed pot-house where we fell in with her. I have given her many hints——"

"Oh, yes, I saw your honour give her one yesterday—with a mug of beer. By the laws, as the ale run all down her face, and she clutched a knife to run at you, I don't think I ever saw such a she-devil! That woman will do for your honour some day, if you provoke her."

"Do for *me?* No, hang it, Mr. Brock, never! She loves every hair of my head, sir: she worships me, Corporal. Egad, yes! she worships me; and would much sooner apply a knife to her own weasand than scratch my little finger!"

"I think she does," said Mr. Brock.

"I'm sure of it," said the Captain. "Women, look you, are like dogs, they like to be ill-treated: they like it, sir; I know they do. I never had anything to do with a woman in my life but I ill-treated her, and she liked me the better."

"Mrs. Hall ought to be *very* fond of you then, sure enough!" said Mr. Corporal.

"Very fond;—ha, ha! Corporal, you wag you—and so she *is* very fond. Yesterday, after the knife-and-beer scene—no wonder I threw the liquor in her face: it was so dev'lish flat that no gentleman could drink it: and I told her never to draw it till dinner-time——"

"Oh, it was enough to put an angel in a fury!" said Brock.

"—Well, yesterday, after the knife business, when you had got the carver out of her hand, off she flings to her bedroom, will not eat a bit of dinner forsooth, and remains locked up for a couple of hours. At two o'clock afternoon (I was over a tankard), out comes the little

she-devil, her face pale, her eyes bleared, and the tip of her nose as red as fire with sniffling and weeping. Making for my hand, 'Max,' says she, 'will you forgive me?' 'What!' says I. 'Forgive a murderess?' says I. 'No, curse me, never!' 'Your cruelty will kill me,' sobbed she. 'Cruelty be hanged!' says I; 'didn't you draw that beer an hour before dinner?' She could say nothing to *this*, you know, and I swore that every time she did so, I would fling it into her face again. Whereupon back she flounced to her chamber, where she wept and stormed until night-time."

"When you forgave her?"

"I *did* forgive her, that's positive. You see I had supped at the 'Rose' along with Tom Trippet and half-a-dozen pretty fellows; and I had eased a great fat-headed Warwickshire land-junker—what d'ye call him?—squire, of forty pieces; and I'm dev'lish good-humoured when I've won, and so Cat and I made it up: but I've taught her never to bring me stale beer again—ha, ha!"

This conversation will explain, a great deal better than any description of ours, however eloquent, the state of things as between Count Maximilian and Mrs. Catherine, and the feelings which they entertained for each other. The woman loved him, that was the fact. And, as we have shown in the previous chapter how John Hayes, a mean-spirited fellow as ever breathed, in respect of all other passions a pigmy, was in the passion of love a giant, and followed Mrs. Catherine with a furious longing which might seem at the first to be foreign to his nature; in the like manner, and playing at cross-purposes, Mrs. Hall had become smitten of the Captain; and, as he said truly only liked him the better for the brutality which she received at his hands. For it is my opinion, Madam, that love is a bodily infirmity, from which humankind can no more escape than from small-pox; and which attacks every one of us, from the first duke in the Peerage down to Jack Ketch inclusive: which has no respect for rank, virtue, or roguery in man, but sets each in his turn in a fever; which breaks out the deuce knows how or why, and, raging its appointed time, fills each individual of the one sex with a blind fury and longing for some one of the other (who may be pure, gentle, blue-eyed, beautiful, and good; or vile, shrewish, squinting, hunchbacked, and hideous, according to circumstances and luck); which dies away, perhaps in the natural course, if left to have its way, but which contradiction causes to rage more furiously than ever. Is not history, from the Trojan war upwards and downwards, full of instances of such strange inexplicable passions? Was not Helen, by the most moderate

calculation, ninety years of age when she went off with his Royal Highness Prince Paris of Troy? Was not Madame La Vallière ill-made, blear-eyed, tallow-complexioned, scraggy, and with hair like tow? Was not Wilkes the ugliest, charmingest, most successful man in the world? Such instances might be carried out so as to fill a volume; but *cui bono?* Love is fate, and not will; its origin not to be explained, its progress irresistible: and the best proof of this may be had at Bow Street any day, where, if you ask any officer of the establishment how they take most thieves, he will tell you at the houses of the women. They must see the dear creatures though they hang for it; they will love, though they have their necks in the halter. And with regard to the other position, that ill-usage on the part of the man does not destroy the affection of the woman, have we not numberless police-reports showing how, when a bystander would beat a husband for beating his wife, man and wife fall together on the interloper and punish him for his meddling?

These points, then, being settled to the satisfaction of all parties, the reader will not be disposed to question the assertion that Mrs. Hall had a real affection for the gallant Count, and grew, as Mr. Brock was pleased to say, like a beefsteak, more tender as she was thumped. Poor thing, poor thing! his flashy airs and smart looks had overcome her in a single hour; and no more is wanted to plunge into love over head and ears; no more is wanted to make a first love with—and a woman's first love lasts *for ever* (a man's twenty-fourth or twenty-fifth is perhaps the best): you can't kill it, do what you will; it takes root, and lives and even grows, never mind what the soil may be in which it is planted, or the bitter weather it must bear—often as one has seen a wall-flower grow—out of a stone.

In the first weeks of their union, the Count had at least been liberal to her: she had a horse and fine clothes, and received abroad some of those flattering attentions which she held at such high price. He had, however, some ill-luck at play, or had been forced to pay some bills, or had some other satisfactory reason for being poor, and his establishment was very speedily diminished. He argued that, as Mrs. Catherine had been accustomed to wait on others all her life, she might now wait upon herself and him; and when the incident of the beer arose, she had been for some time employed as the Count's housekeeper, with unlimited superintendence over his comfort, his cellar, his linen, and such matters as bachelors are delighted to make over to active female hands. To do the poor wretch justice, she actually kept the man's *ménage* in the best order; nor was there any

point of extravagance with which she could be charged, except a little extravagance of dress displayed on the very few occasions when he condescended to walk abroad with her, and extravagance of language and passion in the frequent quarrels they had together. Perhaps in such a connexion as subsisted between this precious couple, these faults are inevitable on the part of the woman. She must be silly and vain, and will pretty surely therefore be fond of dress; and she must, disguise it as she will, be perpetually miserable and brooding over her fall, which will cause her to be violent and quarrelsome.

Such, at least, was Mrs. Hall; and very early did the poor vain, misguided wretch begin to reap what she had sown.

For a man, remorse under these circumstances is perhaps uncommon. No stigma affixes on *him* for betraying a woman: no bitter pangs of mortified vanity; no insulting looks of superiority from his neighbour, and no sentence of contemptuous banishment is read against him; these all fall on the tempted, and not on the tempter, who is permitted to go free. The chief thing that a man learns after having successfully practised on a woman is to despise the poor wretch whom he has won. The game, in fact, and the glory, such as it is, is all his, and the punishment alone falls upon her. Consider this, ladies, when charming young gentlemen come to woo you with soft speeches. You have nothing to win, except wretchedness, and scorn, and desertion. Consider this, and be thankful to your Solomons for telling it.

It came to pass, then, that the Count had come to have a perfect contempt and indifference for Mrs. Hall;—how should he not for a young person who had given herself up to him so easily?—and would have been quite glad of any opportunity of parting with her. But there was a certain lingering shame about the man, which prevented him from saying at once and abruptly, "Go!" and the poor thing did not choose to take such hints as fell out in the course of their conversation and quarrels. And so they kept on together, he treating her with simple insult, and she hanging on desperately, by whatever feeble twig she could find, to the rock beyond which all was naught, or death, to her.

Well, after the night with Tom Trippet and the pretty fellows at the "Rose," to which we have heard the Count allude in the conversation just recorded, Fortune smiled on him a good deal; for the Warwickshire Squire, who had lost forty pieces on that occasion, insisted on having his revenge the night after; when, strange to say, a hundred and fifty more found their way into the pouch of his

Excellency the Count. Such a sum as this quite set the young nobleman afloat again, and brought back a pleasing equanimity to his mind, which had been a good deal disturbed in the former difficult circumstances; and in this, for a little and to a certain extent, poor Cat had the happiness to share. He did not alter the style of his establishment, which consisted, as before, of herself and a small person who acted as scourer, kitchen-wench, and scullion; Mrs. Catherine always putting her hand to the principal pieces of the dinner; but he treated his mistress with tolerable good-humour; or, to speak more correctly, with such bearable brutality as might be expected from a man like him to a woman in her condition. Besides, a certain event was about to take place, which not unusually occurs in circumstances of this nature, and Mrs. Catherine was expecting soon to lie in.

The Captain, distrusting naturally the strength of his own paternal feelings, had kindly endeavoured to provide a parent for the coming infant; and to this end had opened a negotiation with our friend Mr. Thomas Bullock, declaring that Mrs. Cat should have a fortune of twenty guineas, and reminding Tummas of his ancient flame for her: but Mr. Tummas, when this proposition was made to him, declined it, with many oaths, and vowed that he was perfectly satisfied with his present bachelor condition. In this dilemma, Mr. Brock stepped forward, who declared himself very ready to accept Mrs. Catherine and her fortune: and might possibly have become the possessor of both, had not Mrs. Cat, the moment she heard of the proposed arrangement, with fire in her eyes, and rage—oh, how bitter!—in her heart, prevented the success of the measure by proceeding incontinently to the first justice of the peace, and there swearing before his worship who was the father of the coming child.

This proceeding, which she had expected would cause not a little indignation on the part of her lord and master, was received by him, strangely enough, with considerable good-humour: he swore that the wench had served him a good trick, and was rather amused at the anger, the outbreak of fierce rage and contumely, and the wretched, wretched tears of heart-sick desperation, which followed her announcement of this step to him. For Mr. Brock, she repelled his offer with scorn and loathing, and treated the notion of a union with Mr. Bullock with yet fiercer contempt. Marry him indeed! a workhouse pauper carrying a brown-bess! She would have died sooner, she said, or robbed on the highway. And so, to do her justice, she would: for the little minx was one of the vainest creatures in existence, and vanity (as I presume everybody knows) becomes *the* principle in

certain women's hearts—their moral spectacles, their conscience, their meat and drink, their only rule of right and wrong.

As for Mr. Tummas, he, as we have seen, was quite as unfriendly to the proposition as she could be; and the Corporal, with a good deal of comical gravity, vowed that, as he could not be satisfied in his dearest wishes, he would take to drinking for a consolation: which he straightway did.

"Come, Tummas," said he to Mr. Bullock, "since we *can't* have the girl of our hearts, why, hang it, Tummas, let's drink her health!" To which Bullock had no objection. And so strongly did the disappointment weigh upon honest Corporal Brock that even when, after unheard-of quantities of beer, he could scarcely utter a word, he was seen absolutely to weep, and, in accents almost unintelligible, to curse his confounded ill-luck, at being deprived, not of a wife, but of a child: he wanted one so, he said, to comfort him in his old age.

The time of Mrs. Catherine's *couche* drew near, arrived, and was gone through safely. She presented to the world a chopping boy, who might use, if he liked, the Galgenstein arms with a bar-sinister; and in her new cares and duties had not so many opportunities as usual of quarrelling with the Count: who, perhaps, respected her situation, or, at least, was so properly aware of the necessity of quiet to her, that he absented himself from home morning, noon, and night.

The Captain had, it must be confessed, turned these continued absences to a considerable worldly profit, for he played incessantly; and, since his first victory over the Warwickshire Squire, Fortune had been so favourable to him, that he had at various intervals amassed a sum of nearly a thousand pounds, which he used to bring home as he won; and which he deposited in a strong iron chest, cunningly screwed down by himself under his own bed. This Mrs. Catherine regularly made, and the treasure underneath it could be no secret to her. However, the noble Count kept the key, and bound her by many solemn oaths (that he discharged at her himself) not to reveal to any other person the existence of the chest and its contents.

But it is not in a woman's nature to keep such secrets; and the Captain, who left her for days and days, did not reflect that she would seek for confidants elsewhere. For want of a female companion, she was compelled to bestow her sympathies upon Mr. Brock; who, as the Count's corporal, was much in his lodgings, and who did manage to survive the disappointment which he had experienced by Mrs. Catherine's refusal of him.

About two months after the infant's birth, the Captain, who was annoyed by its squalling, put it abroad to nurse, and dismissed its attendant. Mrs. Catherine now resumed her household duties, and was, as before, at once mistress and servant of the establishment. As such, she had the keys of the beer, and was pretty sure of the attentions of the Corporal; who became, as we have said, in the Count's absence, his lady's chief friend and companion. After the manner of ladies, she very speedily confided to him all her domestic secrets: the causes of her former discontent; the Count's ill-treatment of her; the wicked names he called her; the prices that all her gowns had cost her; how he beat her; how much money he won and lost at play; how she had once pawned a coat for him; how he had four new ones, laced, and paid for; what was the best way of cleaning and keeping gold-lace, of making cherry-brandy, pickling salmon, &c. &c. Her *confidences* upon all these subjects used to follow each other in rapid succession: and Mr. Brock became, ere long, quite as well acquainted with the Captain's history for the last year as the Count himself:—for he was careless, and forgot things; women never do. They chronicle all the lover's small actions, his words, his headaches, the dresses he has worn, the things he has liked for dinner on certain days;—all which circumstances commonly are expunged from the male brain immediately after they have occurred, but remain fixed with the female.

To Brock, then, and to Brock only (for she knew no other soul), Mrs. Cat breathed, in strictest confidence, the history of the Count's winnings, and his way of disposing of them; how he kept his money screwed down in an iron chest in their room: and a very lucky fellow did Brock consider his officer for having such a large sum. He and Cat looked at the chest; it was small, but mighty strong, sure enough, and would defy picklocks and thieves. Well, if any man deserved money, the Captain did ("though he might buy me a few yards of that lace I love so," interrupted Cat),—if any man deserved money, he did, for he spent it like a prince, and his hand was always in his pocket.

It must now be stated that Monsieur de Galgenstein had, during Cat's seclusion, cast his eyes upon a young lady of good fortune, who frequented the Assembly at Birmingham, and who was not a little smitten by his title and person. The "four new coats, laced, and paid for," as Cat said, had been purchased, most probably, by his Excellency for the purpose of dazzling the heiress; and he and the coats had succeeded so far as to win from the young woman an actual

profession of love, and a promise of marriage provided Pa would consent. This was obtained,—for Pa was a tradesman; and I suppose every one of my readers has remarked how great an effect a title has on the lower classes. Yes, thank heaven! there is about a free-born Briton a cringing baseness, and lickspittle awe of rank, which does not exist under any tyranny in Europe, and is only to be found here and in America.

All these negotiations had been going on quite unknown to Cat; and, as the Captain had determined, before two months were out, to fling that young woman on the *pavé*, he was kind to her in the meanwhile: people always are when they are swindling you, or meditating an injury against you.

The poor girl had much too high an opinion of her own charms to suspect that the Count could be unfaithful to them, and had no notion of the plot that was formed against her. But Mr. Brock had: for he had seen many times a gilt coach with a pair of fat white horses ambling in the neighbourhood of the town, and the Captain on his black steed caracolling majestically by its side; and he had remarked a fat, pudgy, pale-haired woman treading heavily down the stairs of the Assembly, leaning on the Captain's arm: all these Mr. Brock had seen, not without reflection. Indeed, the Count one day, in great good-humour, had slapped him on the shoulder and told him that he was about speedily to purchase a regiment; when, by his great gods, Mr. Brock should have a pair of colours. Perhaps this promise occasioned his silence to Mrs. Catherine hitherto; perhaps he never would have peached at all; and perhaps, therefore, this history would never have been written, but for a small circumstance which occurred at this period.

"What can you want with that drunken old Corporal always about your quarters?" said Mr. Trippet to the Count one day, as they sat over their wine, in the midst of a merry company, at the Captain's rooms.

"What!" said he. "Old Brock? The old thief has been more useful to me than many a better man. He is as brave in a row as a lion, as cunning in intrigue as a fox; he can nose a dun at an inconceivable distance, and scent out a pretty woman be she behind ever so many stone walls. If a gentleman wants a good rascal now, I can recommend him. I am going to reform, you know, and must turn him out of my service."

"And pretty Mrs. Cat?"

"Oh, curse pretty Mrs. Cat! she may go too."

"And the brat?"

"Why, you have parishes, and what not, here in England. Egad! if a gentleman were called upon to keep all his children, there would be no living: no, stap my vitals! Crœsus couldn't stand it."

"No, indeed," said Mr. Trippet: "you are right; and when a gentleman marries, he is bound in honour to give up such low connexions as are useful when he is a bachelor."

"Of course; and give them up I will, when the sweet Mrs. Dripping is mine. As for the girl, you can have her, Tom Trippet, if you take a fancy to her; and as for the Corporal, he may be handed over to my successor in Cutts's:—for I will have a regiment to myself, that's poz; and to take with me such a swindling, pimping, thieving, brandy-faced rascal as this Brock will never do. Egad! he's a disgrace to the service. As it is, I've often a mind to have the superannuated vagabond drummed out of the corps."

Although this *résumé* of Mr. Brock's character and accomplishments was very just, it came perhaps with an ill grace from Count Gustavus Adolphus Maximilian, who had profited by all his qualities, and who certainly would never have given this opinion of them had he known that the door of his dining-parlour was open, and that the gallant Corporal, who was in the passage, could hear every syllable that fell from the lips of his commanding officer. We shall not say, after the fashion of the story-books, that Mr. Brock listened with a flashing eye and a distended nostril; that his chest heaved tumultuously, and that his hand fell down mechanically to his side, where it played with the brass handle of his sword. Mr. Kean would have gone through most of these bodily exercises had he been acting the part of a villain enraged and disappointed like Corporal Brock; but that gentleman walked away without any gestures of any kind, and as gently as possible. "He'll turn me out of the regiment, will he?" says he, quite *piano;* and then added (*con molta espressione*), "I'll do for him."

And it is to be remarked how generally, in cases of this nature, gentlemen stick to their word.

CHAPTER III.

IN WHICH A NARCOTIC IS ADMINISTERED, AND A GREAT DEAL OF GENTEEL SOCIETY DEPICTED.

WHEN the Corporal, who had retreated to the street-door immediately on hearing the above conversation, returned to the Captain's lodgings and paid his respects to Mrs. Catherine, he found that lady in high good-humour. The Count had been with her, she said, along with a friend of his, Mr. Trippet; had promised her twelve yards of the lace she coveted so much; had vowed that the child should have as much more for a cloak; and had not left her until he had sat with her for an hour, or more, over a bowl of punch, which he made on purpose for her. Mr. Trippet stayed too. "A mighty pleasant man," said she; "only not very wise, and seemingly a good deal in liquor."

"A good deal indeed!" said the Corporal. "He was so tipsy just now, that he could hardly stand. He and his honour were talking to Nan Fantail in the market-place; and she pulled Trippet's wig off, for wanting to kiss her."

"The nasty fellow!" said Mrs. Cat, "to demean himself with such low people as Nan Fantail, indeed! Why, upon my conscience now, Corporal, it was but an hour ago that Mr. Trippet swore he never saw such a pair of eyes as mine, and would like to cut the Captain's throat for the love of me. Nan Fantail indeed!"

"Nan's an honest girl, Madam Catherine, and was a great favourite

of the Captain's before some one else came in his way. No one can say a word against her—not a word."

"And pray, Corporal, who ever did?" said Mrs. Cat, rather offended. "A nasty, ugly slut! I wonder what the men can see in her?"

"She has got a smart way with her, sure enough; it's what amuses the men, and——"

"And what? You don't mean to say that my Max is fond of her *now?*" said Mrs. Catherine, looking very fierce.

"Oh, no; not at all: not of *her;*—that is——"

"Not of *her!*" screamed she. "Of whom, then?"

"Oh, psha! nonsense! Of you, my dear, to be sure; who else should he care for? And, besides, what business is it of mine?" And herewith the Corporal began whistling, as if he would have no more of the conversation. But Mrs. Cat was not to be satisfied,—not she, and carried on her cross-questions.

"Why, look you," said the Corporal, after parrying many of these, —"Why, look you, I'm an old fool, Catherine, and I *must* blab. That man has been the best friend I ever had, and so I was quiet; but I can't keep it in any longer,—no, hang me if I can! It's my belief he's acting like a rascal by you: he deceives you, Catherine; he's a scoundrel, Mrs. Hall, that's the truth on't."

Catherine prayed him to tell all he knew; and he resumed.

"He wants you off his hands; he's sick of you, and so brought here that fool Tom Trippet, who has taken a fancy to you. He has not the courage to turn you out of doors like a man; though in-doors he can treat you like a beast. But I'll tell you what he'll do. In a month he will go to Coventry, or pretend to go there, on recruiting business. No such thing, Mrs. Hall: he's going on *marriage* business; and he'll leave you without a farthing, to starve or to rot, for him. It's all arranged, I tell you: in a month, you are to be starved into becoming Tom Trippet's mis. ess; and his honour is to marry rich Miss Dripping, the twenty-thousand-pounder from London; and to purchase a regiment;—and to get old Brock drummed out of Cutts's too," said the Corporal, under his breath. But he might have spoken out, if he chose; for the poor young woman had sunk on the ground in a real honest fit.

"I thought I should give it her," said Mr. Brock, as he procured a glass of water; and, lifting her on to a sofa, sprinkled the same over her. "Hang it! how pretty she is."

* * * * *

When Mrs. Catherine came to herself again, Brock's tone with her was kind, and almost feeling. Nor did the poor wench herself indulge in any subsequent shiverings and hysterics, such as usually follow the fainting-fits of persons of higher degree. She pressed him for further explanations, which he gave, and to which she listened with a great deal of calmness; nor did many tears, sobs, sighs, or exclamations of sorrow or anger escape from her: only when the Corporal was taking his leave, and said to her point-blank,—"Well, Mrs. Catherine, and what do you intend to do?" she did not reply a word; but gave a look which made him exclaim, on leaving the room,—

"By heavens! the woman means murder! I would not be the Holofernes to lie by the side of such a Judith as that—not I!" And he went his way, immersed in deep thought. When the Captain returned at night, she did not speak to him; and when he swore at her for being sulky, she only said she had a headache, and was dreadfully ill: with which excuse Gustavus Adolphus seemed satisfied, and left her to herself.

He saw her the next morning for a moment: he was going a-shooting.

Catherine had no friend, as is usual in tragedies and romances,—no mysterious sorceress of her acquaintance to whom she could apply for poison,—so she went simply to the apothecaries, pretending at each that she had a dreadful toothache, and procuring from them as much laudanum as she thought would suit her purpose.

When she went home again, she seemed almost gay. Mr. Brock complimented her upon the alteration in her appearance; and she was enabled to receive the Captain at his return from shooting in such a manner as made him remark that she had got rid of her sulks of the morning, and might sup with them, if she chose to keep her good-humour. The supper was got ready, and the gentlemen had the punch-bowl when the cloth was cleared,—Mrs. Catherine, with her delicate hands, preparing the liquor.

It is useless to describe the conversation that took place, or to reckon the number of bowls that were emptied; or to tell how Mr. Trippet, who was one of the guests, and declined to play at cards when some of the others began, chose to remain by Mrs. Catherine's side, and make violent love to her. All this might be told, and the account, however faithful, would not be very pleasing. No, indeed! And here, though we are only in the third chapter of this history, we feel almost sick of the characters that appear in it, and the adventures which they

are called upon to go through. But how can we help ourselves? The public will hear of nothing but rogues; and the only way in which poor authors, who must live, can act honestly by the public and themselves, is to paint such thieves as they are: not dandy, poetical, rose-water thieves; but real downright scoundrels, leading scoundrelly lives, drunken, profligate, dissolute, low; as scoundrels will be. They don't quote Plato, like Eugene Aram; or live like gentlemen, and sing the pleasantest ballads in the world, like jolly Dick Turpin; or prate eternally about τὸ καλὸν, like that precious canting Maltravers, whom we all of us have read about and pitied; or die whitewashed saints, like poor "Biss Dadsy" in "Oliver Twist." No, my dear Madam, you and your daughters have no right to admire and sympathize with any such persons, fictitious or real: you ought to be made cordially to detest, scorn, loathe, abhor, and abominate all people of this kidney. Men of genius like those whose works we have above alluded to, have no business to make these characters interesting or agreeable; to be feeding your morbid fancies, or indulging their own, with such monstrous food. For our parts, young ladies, we beg you to bottle up your tears, and not waste a single drop of them on any one of the heroes or heroines in this history: they are all rascals, every soul of them, and behave "as sich." Keep your sympathy for those who deserve it: don't carry it, for preference, to the Old Bailey, and grow maudlin over the company assembled there.

Just, then, have the kindness to fancy that the conversation which took place over the bowls of punch which Mrs. Catherine prepared, was such as might be expected to take place where the host was a dissolute, dare-devil, libertine captain of dragoons, the guests for the most part of the same class, and the hostess a young woman originally from a country alehouse, and for the present mistress to the entertainer of the society. They talked, and they drank, and they grew tipsy; and very little worth hearing occurred during the course of the whole evening. Mr. Brock officiated, half as the servant, half as the companion of the society. Mr. Thomas Trippet made violent love to Mrs. Catherine, while her lord and master was playing at dice with the other gentlemen: and on this night, strange to say, the Captain's fortune seemed to desert him. The Warwickshire Squire, from whom he had won so much, had an amazing run of good luck. The Captain called perpetually for more drink, and higher stakes, and lost almost every throw. Three hundred, four hundred, six hundred—all his winnings of the previous months were swallowed up in the course of a few hours. The Corporal looked on; and, to do him justice, seemed

very grave, as, sum by sum, the Squire scored down the Count's losses on the paper before him.

Most of the company had taken their hats and staggered off. The Squire and Mr. Trippet were the only two that remained, the latter still lingering by Mrs. Catherine's sofa and table; and as she, as we have stated, had been employed all the evening in mixing the liquor for the gamesters, he was at the head-quarters of love and drink, and had swallowed so much of each as hardly to be able to speak.

The dice went rattling on; the candles were burning dim, with great long wicks. Mr. Trippet could hardly see the Captain, and thought, as far as his muzzy reason would let him, that the Captain could not see him: so he rose from his chair as well as he could, and fell down on Mrs. Catherine's sofa. His eyes were fixed, his face was pale, his jaw hung down; and he flung out his arms and said, in a maudlin voice, "Oh, you byoo-oo-oo-tiffle Cathrine, I must have a kick-kick-iss."

"Beast!" said Mrs. Catherine, and pushed him away. The drunken wretch fell off the sofa, and on to the floor, where he stayed; and, after snorting out some unintelligible sounds, went to sleep.

The dice went rattling on; the candles were burning dim, with great long wicks.

"Seven's the main," cried the Count. "Four. Three to two against the caster."

"Ponies," said the Warwickshire Squire.

Rattle, rattle, rattle, rattle, clatter, *nine*. Clap, clap, clap, clap, *eleven*. Clutter, clutter, clutter, clutter: "Seven it is," says the Warwickshire Squire. "That makes eight hundred, Count."

"One throw for two hundred," said the Count. "But stop! Cat, give us some more punch."

Mrs. Cat came forward; she looked a little pale, and her hand trembled somewhat. "Here is the punch, Max," said she. It was steaming hot, in a large glass. "Don't drink it all," said she; "leave me some."

"How dark it is!" said the Count, eyeing it.

"It's the brandy," said Cat.

"Well, here goes! Squire, curse you! here's your health, and bad luck to you!" and he gulped off more than half the liquor at a draught. But presently he put down the glass and cried, "What infernal poison is this, Cat?"

"Poison!" said she. "It's no poison. Give me the glass." And

she pledged Max, and drank a little of it. "'Tis good punch, Max, and of my brewing; I don't think you will ever get any better." And she went back to the sofa again, and sat down, and looked at the players.

Mr. Brock looked at her white face and fixed eyes with a grim kind of curiosity. The Count sputtered, and cursed the horrid taste of the punch still; but he presently took the box, and made his threatened throw.

As before, the Squire beat him; and having booked his winnings, rose from table as well as he might, and besought Corporal Brock to lead him downstairs; which Mr. Brock did.

Liquor had evidently stupefied the Count: he sat with his head between his hands, muttering wildly about ill-luck, seven's the main, bad punch, and so on. The street-door banged to; and the steps of Brock and the Squire were heard, until they could be heard no more.

"Max," said she; but he did not answer. "Max," said she again, laying her hand on his shoulder.

"Curse you," said that gentleman, "keep off, and don't be laying your paws upon me. Go to bed, you jade, or to ——, for what I care; and give me first some more punch—a gallon more punch, do you hear?"

The gentleman, by the curses at the commencement of this little speech, and the request contained at the end of it, showed that his losses vexed him, and that he was anxious to forget them temporarily.

"Oh, Max!" whimpered Mrs. Cat, "you—don't—want—any more punch?"

"Don't! Shan't I be drunk in my own house, you cursed whimpering jade you? Get out!" And with this the Captain proceeded to administer a blow upon Mrs. Catherine's cheek.

Contrary to her custom, she did not avenge it, or seek to do so, as on the many former occasions when disputes of this nature had arisen between the Count and her; but now Mrs. Catherine fell on her knees, and clasping her hands, and looking pitifully in the Count's face, cried, "Oh, Count, forgive me, forgive me!"

"Forgive you! What for? Because I slapped your face? Ha, ha! I'll forgive you again, if you don't mind."

"Oh, no, no, no!" said she, wringing her hands. "It isn't that. Max, dear Max, will you forgive me? It isn't the blow—I don't mind that; it's ——"

"It's what, you—maudlin fool?"

"*It's the punch!*"

The Count, who was more than half-seas-over, here assumed an air of much tipsy gravity. "The punch! No, I never will forgive you that last glass of punch. Of all the foul, beastly drinks I ever tasted, that was the worst. No, I never will forgive you that punch."

"Oh, it isn't that, it isn't that!" said she.

"I tell you it is that, —— you! That punch, I say that punch was no better than paw—aw—oison." And here the Count's head sank back, and he fell to snore.

"*It was poison!*" said she.

"*What!*" screamed he, waking up at once, and spurning her away from him. "What, you infernal murderess, have you killed me?"

"Oh, Max!—don't kill me, Max! It was laudanum—indeed it was. You were going to be married, and I was furious, and I went and got——"

"Hold your tongue, you fiend," roared out the Count; and with more presence of mind than politeness, he flung the remainder of the liquor (and, indeed, the glass with it) at the head of Mrs. Catherine. But the poisoned chalice missed its mark, and fell right on the nose of Mr. Tom Trippet, who was left asleep and unobserved under the table.

Bleeding, staggering, swearing, indeed a ghastly sight, up sprung Mr. Trippet, and drew his rapier. "Come on," says he; "never say die! What's the row? I'm ready for a dozen of you." And he made many blind and furious passes about the room.

"Curse you, we'll die together!" shouted the Count, as he too pulled out his toledo, and sprung at Mrs. Catherine.

"Help! murder! thieves!" shrieked she. "Save me, Mr. Trippet, save me!" and she placed that gentleman between herself and the Count, and then made for the door of the bedroom, and gained it, and bolted it.

"Out of the way, Trippet," roared the Count—"out of the way, you drunken beast! I'll murder her, I will—I'll have the devil's life." And here he gave a swinging cut at Mr. Trippet's sword: it sent the weapon whirling clean out of his hand, and through a window into the street.

"Take my life, then," said Mr. Trippet: "I'm drunk, but I'm a man, and, damme! will never say die."

"I don't want your life, you stupid fool. Hark you, Trippet, wake and be sober, if you can. That woman has heard of my marriage with Miss Dripping."

"Twenty thousand pound," ejaculated Trippet.

"She has been jealous, I tell you, and *poisoned* us. She has put laudanum into the punch."

"What, in *my* punch?" said Trippet, growing quite sober, and losing his courage. "O Lord! O Lord!"

"Don't stand howling there, but run for a doctor; 'tis our only chance." And away ran Mr. Trippet, as if the deuce were at his heels.

The Count had forgotten his murderous intentions regarding his mistress, or had deferred them at least, under the consciousness of his own pressing danger. And it must be said, in the praise of a man who had fought for and against Marlborough and Tallard, that his courage in this trying and novel predicament never for a moment deserted him, but that he showed the greatest daring, as well as ingenuity, in meeting and averting the danger. He flew to the side-board, where were the relics of a supper, and seizing the mustard and salt pots, and a bottle of oil, he emptied them all into a jug, into which he further poured a vast quantity of hot water. This pleasing mixture he then, without a moment's hesitation, placed to his lips, and swallowed as much of it as nature would allow him. But when he had imbibed about a quart, the anticipated effect was produced, and he was enabled, by the power of this ingenious extemporaneous emetic, to get rid of much of the poison which Mrs. Catherine had administered to him.

He was employed in these efforts when the doctor entered, along with Mr. Brock and Mr. Trippet; who was not a little pleased to hear that the poisoned punch had not in all probability been given to him. He was recommended to take some of the Count's mixture, as a precautionary measure; but this he refused, and retired home, leaving the Count under charge of the physician and his faithful corporal.

It is not necessary to say what further remedies were employed by them to restore the Captain to health; but after some time the doctor, pronouncing that the danger was, he hoped, averted, recommended that his patient should be put to bed, and that somebody should sit by him; which Brock promised to do.

"That she-devil will murder me, if you don't," gasped the poor Count. "You must turn her out of the bedroom; or break open the door, if she refuses to let you in."

And this step was found to be necessary; for, after shouting many times, and in vain, Mr. Brock found a small iron bar (indeed he had

the instrument for many days in his pocket), and forced the lock. The room was empty, the window was open : the pretty barmaid of the "Bugle" had fled.

"The chest," said the Count—"is the chest safe?"

The Corporal flew to the bed, under which it was screwed, and looked, and said, "It *is* safe, thank heaven!" The window was closed. The Captain, who was too weak to stand without help, was undressed and put to bed. The Corporal sat down by his side; slumber stole over the eyes of the patient; and his wakeful nurse marked with satisfaction the progress of the beneficent restorer of health.

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When the Captain awoke, as he did some time afterwards, he found, very much to his surprise, that a gag had been placed in his mouth, and that the Corporal was in the act of wheeling his bed to another part of the room. He attempted to move, and gave utterance to such unintelligible sounds as could issue through a silk handkerchief.

"If your honour stirs or cries out in the least, I will cut your honour's throat," said the Corporal.

And then, having recourse to his iron bar (the reader will now see why he was provided with such an implement, for he had been meditating this *coup* for some days), he proceeded first to attempt to burst the lock of the little iron chest in which the Count kept his treasure, and failing in this, to unscrew it from the ground; which operation he performed satisfactorily.

"You see, Count," said he, calmly, "when rogues fall out, there's the deuce to pay. You'll have me drummed out of the regiment, will you? I'm going to leave it of my own accord, look you, and to live like a gentleman for the rest of my days. *Schlafen sie wohl*, noble Captain: *bon repos.* The Squire will be with you pretty early in the morning, to ask for the money you owe him."

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With these sarcastic observations Mr. Brock departed; not by the window, as Mrs. Catherine had done, but by the door, quietly, and so into the street. And when, the next morning, the doctor came to visit his patient, he brought with him a story how, at the dead of night, Mr. Brock had roused the ostler at the stables where the Captain's horses were kept—had told him that Mrs. Catherine had

poisoned the Count, and had run off with a thousand pounds; and how he and all lovers of justice ought to scour the country in pursuit of the criminal. For this end Mr. Brock mounted the Count's best horse—that very animal on which he had carried away Mrs. Catherine: and thus, on a single night, Count Maximilian had lost his mistress, his money, his horse, his corporal, and was very near losing his life.

CHAPTER IV.

IN WHICH MRS. CATHERINE BECOMES AN HONEST WOMAN AGAIN.

IN this woful plight, moneyless, wifeless, horseless, corporalless, with a gag in his mouth and a rope round his body, are we compelled to leave the gallant Galgenstein, until his friends and the progress of this history shall deliver him from his durance. Mr. Brock's adventures on the Captain's horse must likewise be pretermitted; for it is our business to follow Mrs. Catherine through the window by which she made her escape, and among the various chances that befell her.

She had one cause to congratulate herself,—that she had not her baby at her back; for the infant was safely housed under the care of a nurse, to whom the Captain was answerable. Beyond this her prospects were but dismal: no home to fly to, but a few shillings in her pocket, and a whole heap of injuries and dark revengeful thoughts in her bosom: it was a sad task to her to look either backwards or forwards. Whither was she to fly? How to live? What good chance was to befriend her? There was an angel watching over the steps of Mrs. Cat—not a good one, I think, but one of those from that unnameable place, who have their many subjects here on earth, and often are pleased to extricate them from worse perplexities.

Mrs. Cat, now, had not committed murder, but as bad as murder; and as she felt not the smallest repentance in her heart—as she had, in the course of her life and connexion with the Captain, performed

and gloried in a number of wicked coquetries, idlenesses, vanities, lies, fits of anger, slanders, foul abuses, and what not—she was fairly bound over to this dark angel whom we have alluded to; and he dealt with her, and aided her, as one of his own children.

I do not mean to say that, in this strait, he appeared to her in the likeness of a gentleman in black, and made her sign her name in blood to a document conveying over to him her soul, in exchange for certain conditions to be performed by him. Such diabolical bargains have always appeared to me unworthy of the astute personage who is supposed to be one of the parties to them; and who would scarcely be fool enough to pay dearly for that which he can have in a few years for nothing. It is not, then, to be supposed that a demon of darkness appeared to Mrs. Cat, and led her into a flaming chariot, harnessed by dragons, and careering through air at the rate of a thousand leagues a minute. No such thing: the vehicle that was sent to aid her was one of a much more vulgar description.

The "Liverpool carryvan," then, which in the year 1706 used to perform the journey between London and that place in ten days, left Birmingham about an hour after Mrs. Catherine had quitted that town; and as she sat weeping on a hillside, and plunged in bitter meditation, the lumbering, jingling vehicle overtook her. The coachman was marching by the side of his horses, and encouraging them to maintain their pace of two miles an hour; the passengers had some of them left the vehicle, in order to walk up the hill: and the carriage had arrived at the top of it, and, meditating a brisk trot down the declivity, waited there until the lagging passengers should arrive: when Jehu, casting a good-natured glance upon Mrs. Catherine, asked the pretty maid whence she was come, and whether she would like a ride in his carriage. To the latter of which questions Mrs. Catherine replied truly yes; to the former, her answer was that she had come from Stratford: whereas, as we very well know, she had lately quitted Birmingham.

"Hast thee seen a woman pass this way, on a black horse, with a large bag of goold over the saddle?" said Jehu, preparing to mount upon the roof of his coach.

"No, indeed," said Mrs. Cat.

"Nor a trooper on another horse after her—no? Well, there be a mortal row down Birmingham way about sich a one. She have killed, they say, nine gentlemen at supper, and have strangled a German prince in bed. She have robbed him of twenty thousand guineas, and have rode away on a black horse."

"That can't be I," said Mrs. Cat, naïvely, "for I have but three shillings and a groat."

"No, it can't be thee, truly, for where's your bag of goold? and, besides, thee hast got too pretty a face to do such wicked things as to kill nine gentlemen and strangle a German prince."

"Law, coachman," said Mrs. Cat, blushing archly—"Law, coachman, *do* you think so?" The girl would have been pleased with a compliment even on her way to be hanged; and the parley ended by Mrs. Catherine stepping into the carriage, where there was room for eight people at least, and where two or three individuals had already taken their places.

For these Mrs. Catherine had in the first place to make a story, which she did; and a very glib one for a person of her years and education. Being asked whither she was bound, and how she came to be alone of a morning sitting by a road-side, she invented a neat history suitable to the occasion, which elicited much interest from her fellow-passengers: one in particular, a young man, who had caught a glimpse of her face under her hood, was very tender in his attentions to her.

But whether it was that she had been too much fatigued by the occurrences of the past day and sleepless night, or whether the little laudanum which she had drunk a few hours previously now began to act upon her, certain it is that Mrs. Cat now suddenly grew sick, feverish, and extraordinarily sleepy; and in this state she continued for many hours, to the pity of all her fellow-travellers. At length the "carryvan" reached the inn, where horses and passengers were accustomed to rest for a few hours, and to dine; and Mrs. Catherine was somewhat awakened by the stir of the passengers, and the friendly voice of the inn-servant welcoming them to dinner. The gentleman who had been smitten by her beauty now urged her very politely to descend; which, taking the protection of his arm, she accordingly did.

He made some very gallant speeches to her as she stepped out; and she must have been very much occupied by them, or wrapt up in her own thoughts, or stupefied by sleep, fever, and opium, for she did not take any heed of the place into which she was going: which had she done, she would probably have preferred remaining in the coach, dinnerless and ill. Indeed, the inn into which she was about to make her entrance was no other than the "Bugle," from which she set forth at the commencement of this history; and which then, as now, was kept by her relative, the thrifty Mrs. Score. That good landlady,

seeing a lady, in a smart hood and cloak, leaning, as if faint, upon the arm of a gentleman of good appearance, concluded them to be man and wife, and folks of quality too; and with much discrimination, as well as sympathy, led them through the public kitchen to her own private parlour, or bar, where she handed the lady an armchair, and asked what she would like to drink. By this time, and indeed at the very moment she heard her aunt's voice, Mrs. Catherine was aware of her situation; and when her companion retired, and the landlady with much officiousness insisted on removing her hood, she was quite prepared for the screech of surprise which Mrs. Score gave on dropping it, exclaiming, "Why, law bless us, it's our Catherine!"

"I'm very ill, and tired, aunt," said Cat; "and would give the world for a few hours' sleep."

"A few hours and welcome, my love, and a sack-posset too. You do look sadly tired and poorly, sure enough. Ah, Cat, Cat! you great ladies are sad rakes, I do believe. I wager now, that with all your balls, and carriages, and fine clothes, you are neither so happy nor so well as when you lived with your poor old aunt, who used to love you so." And with these gentle words, and an embrace or two, which Mrs. Catherine wondered at, and permitted, she was conducted to that very bed which the Count had occupied a year previously, and undressed, and laid in it, and affectionately tucked up, by her aunt, who marvelled at the fineness of her clothes, as she removed them piece by piece; and when she saw that in Mrs. Catherine's pocket there was only the sum of three-and-four-pence, said, archly, "There was no need of money, for the Captain took care of that."

Mrs. Cat did not undeceive her; and deceived Mrs. Score certainly was,—for she imagined the well-dressed gentleman who led Cat from the carriage was no other than the Count; and, as she had heard, from time to time, exaggerated reports of the splendour of the establishment which he kept up, she was induced to look upon her niece with the very highest respect, and to treat her as if she were a fine lady. "And so she *is* a fine lady," Mrs. Score had said months ago, when some of these flattering stories reached her, and she had overcome her first fury at Catherine's elopement. "The girl was very cruel to leave me; but we must recollect that she is as good as married to a nobleman, and must all forget and forgive, you know."

This speech had been made to Doctor Dobbs, who was in the habit of taking a pipe and a tankard at the "Bugle," and it had been roundly reprobated by the worthy divine; who told Mrs. Score that the crime of Catherine was only the more heinous, if it had been

committed from interested motives; and protested that, were she a princess, he would never speak to her again. Mrs. Score thought and pronounced the Doctor's opinion to be very bigoted; indeed, she was one of those persons who have a marvellous respect for prosperity, and a corresponding scorn for ill-fortune. When, therefore, she returned to the public room, she went graciously to the gentleman who had led Mrs. Catherine from the carriage, and with a knowing curtsey welcomed him to the "Bugle;" told him that his lady would not come to dinner, but bade her say, with her best love to his lordship, that the ride had fatigued her, and that she would lie in bed for an hour or two.

This speech was received with much wonder by his lordship; who was, indeed, no other than a Liverpool tailor going to London to learn fashions; but he only smiled, and did not undeceive the landlady, who herself went off, smilingly, to bustle about dinner.

The two or three hours allotted to that meal by the liberal coach-masters of those days passed away, and Mr. Coachman, declaring that his horses were now rested enough, and that they had twelve miles to ride, put the steeds to, and summoned the passengers. Mrs. Score, who had seen with much satisfaction that her niece was really ill, and her fever more violent, and hoped to have her for many days an inmate in her house, now came forward, and casting upon the Liverpool tailor a look of profound but respectful melancholy, said, "My lord (for I recollect your lordship quite well), the lady upstairs is so ill, that it would be a sin to move her: had I not better tell coachman to take down your lordship's trunks, and the lady's, and make you a bed in the next room?"

Very much to her surprise, this proposition was received with a roar of laughter. "Madam," said the person addressed, "I'm not a lord, but a tailor and draper; and as for that young woman, before to-day I never set eyes on her."

"*What!*" screamed out Mrs. Score. "Are not you the Count? Do you mean to say that you a'n't Cat's ——— ? *Do* you mean to say that you didn't order her bed, and that you won't pay this here little bill?" And with this she produced a document, by which the Count's lady was made her debtor in a sum of half-a-guinea.

These passionate words excited more and more laughter. "Pay it, my lord," said the coachman; "and then come along, for time presses." "Our respects to her ladyship," said one passenger. "Tell her my lord can't wait," said another; and with much merriment one and all quitted the hotel, entered the coach, and rattled off.

Dumb—pale with terror and rage—bill in hand, Mrs. Score had followed the company; but when the coach disappeared, her senses returned. Back she flew into the inn, overturning the ostler, not deigning to answer Doctor Dobbs (who, from behind soft tobacco-fumes, mildly asked the reason of her disturbance), and, bounding upstairs like a fury, she rushed into the room where Catherine lay.

"Well, madam!" said she, in her highest key, "do you mean that you have come into this here house to swindle me? Do you dare for to come with your airs here, and call yourself a nobleman's lady, and sleep in the best bed, when you're no better nor a common tramper? I'll thank you, ma'am, to get out, ma'am. I'll have no sick paupers in this house, ma'am. You know your way to the workhouse, ma'am, and there I'll trouble you for to go." And here Mrs. Score proceeded quickly to pull off the bedclothes; and poor Cat arose, shivering with fright and fever.

She had no spirit to answer, as she would have done the day before, when an oath from any human being would have brought half-a-dozen from her in return; or a knife, or a plate, or a leg of mutton, if such had been to her hand. She had no spirit left for such repartees; but in reply to the above words of Mrs. Score, and a great many more of the same kind—which are not necessary for our history, but which that lady uttered with inconceivable shrillness and volubility, the poor wench could say little,—only sob and shiver, and gather up the clothes again, crying, "Oh, aunt, don't speak unkind to me! I'm very unhappy, and very ill!"

"Ill, you strumpet! ill, be hanged! Ill is as ill does; and if you are ill, it's only what you merit. Get out! dress yourself—tramp! Get to the workhouse, and don't come to cheat me any more! Dress yourself—do you hear? Satin petticoat forsooth, and lace to her smock!"

Poor, wretched, chattering, burning, shivering, Catherine huddled on her clothes as well as she might: she seemed hardly to know or see what she was doing, and did not reply a single word to the many that the landlady let fall. Cat tottered down the narrow stairs, and through the kitchen, and to the door; which she caught hold of, and paused awhile, and looked into Mrs. Score's face, as for one more chance. "Get out, you nasty trull!" said that lady, sternly, with arms akimbo; and poor Catherine, with a most piteous scream and out-gush of tears, let go of the door-post and staggered away into the road.

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"Why, no—yes—no—it is poor Catherine Hall, as I live!" said somebody starting up, shoving aside Mrs. Score very rudely, and running into the road, wig off and pipe in hand. It was honest Doctor Dobbs; and the result of his interview with Mrs. Cat was, that he gave up for ever smoking his pipe at the "Bugle;" and that she lay sick of a fever for some weeks in his house.

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Over this part of Mrs. Cat's history we shall be as brief as possible; for, to tell the truth, nothing immoral occurred during her whole stay at the good Doctor's house; and we are not going to insult the reader by offering him silly pictures of piety, cheerfulness, good sense, and simplicity; which are milk-and-water virtues after all, and have no relish with them like a good strong vice, highly peppered. Well, to be short: Doctor Dobbs, though a profound theologian, was a very simple gentleman; and before Mrs. Cat had been a month in the house, he had learned to look upon her as one of the most injured and repentant characters in the world; and had, with Mrs. Dobbs, resolved many plans for the future welfare of the young Magdalen. "She was but sixteen, my love, recollect," said the Doctor; "she was carried off, not by her own wish either. The Count swore he would marry her; and, though she did not leave him until that monster tried to poison her, yet think what a fine Christian spirit the poor girl has shown! she forgives him as heartily—more heartily, I am sure, than I do Mrs. Score for turning her adrift in that wicked way." The reader will perceive some difference in the Doctor's statement and ours, which we assure him is the true one; but the fact is, the honest rector had had his tale from Mrs. Cat, and it was not in his nature to doubt, if she had told him a history ten times more wonderful.

The reverend gentleman and his wife then laid their heads together; and, recollecting something of John Hayes's former attachment to Mrs. Cat, thought that it might be advantageously renewed, should Hayes be still constant. Having very adroitly sounded Catherine (so adroitly, indeed, as to ask her "whether she would like to marry John Hayes?"), that young woman had replied, "No. She had loved John Hayes—he had been her early, only love; but she was fallen now, and not good enough for him." And this made the Dobbs family admire her more and more, and cast about for means to bring the marriage to pass.

Hayes was away from the village when Mrs. Cat had arrived there; but he did not fail to hear of her illness, and how her aunt had deserted her, and the good Doctor taken her in. The worthy Doctor

himself met Mr. Hayes on the green; and, telling him that some repairs were wanting in his kitchen, begged him to step in and examine them. Hayes first said no, plump, and then no, gently; and then pished, and then psha'd; and then, trembling very much, went in: and there sat Mrs. Catherine, trembling very much too.

What passed between them? If your ladyship is anxious to know, think of that morning when Sir John himself popped the question. Could there be anything more stupid than the conversation which took place? Such stuff is not worth repeating: no, not when uttered by people in the very genteelest of company; as for the amorous dialogue of a carpenter and an ex-barmaid, it is worse still. Suffice it to say, that Mr. Hayes, who had had a year to recover from his passion, and had, to all appearances, quelled it, was over head and ears again the very moment he saw Mrs. Cat, and had all his work to do again.

Whether the Doctor knew what was going on, I can't say; but this matter is certain, that every evening Hayes was now in the rectory kitchen, or else walking abroad with Mrs. Catherine: and whether she ran away with him, or he with her, I shall not make it my business to inquire; but certainly at the end of three months (which must be crowded up into this one little sentence), another elopement took place in the village. "I should have prevented it, certainly," said Doctor Dobbs—whereat his wife smiled; "but the young people kept the matter a secret from me." And so he would, had he known it; but though Mrs. Dobbs had made several attempts to acquaint him with the precise hour and method of the intended elopement, he peremptorily ordered her to hold her tongue. The fact is, that the matter had been discussed by the rector's lady many times. "Young Hayes," would she say, "has a pretty little fortune and trade of his own; he is an only son, and may marry as he likes; and though not specially handsome, generous, or amiable, has an undeniable love for Cat (who, you know, must not be particular), and the sooner she marries him, I think, the better. They can't be married at our church, you know, and ——" "Well," said the Doctor, "if they are married elsewhere, *I* can't help it, and know nothing about it, look you." And upon this hint the elopement took place: which, indeed, was peaceably performed early one Sunday morning about a month after; Mrs. Hall getting behind Mr. Hayes on a pillion, and all the children of the parsonage giggling behind the window-blinds to see the pair go off.

During this month Mr. Hayes had caused the banns to be published at the town of Worcester; judging rightly that in a great

town they would cause no such remark as in a solitary village, and thither he conducted his lady. O ill-starred John Hayes! whither do the dark fates lead you? O foolish Doctor Dobbs, to forget that young people ought to honour their parents, and to yield to silly Mrs. Dobbs's ardent propensity for making matches!

* * * * *

The *London Gazette* of the 1st April, 1706, contains a proclamation by the Queen for putting into execution an Act of Parliament for the encouragement and increase of seamen, and for the better and speedier manning of her Majesty's fleet, which authorises all justices to issue warrants to constables, petty constables, headboroughs, and tything-men, to enter, and if need be, to break open the doors of any houses where they shall believe deserting seamen to be; and for the further increase and encouragement of the navy, to take able-bodied landsmen when seamen fail. This Act, which occupies four columns of the *Gazette*, and another of similar length and meaning for pressing men into the army, need not be quoted at length here; but caused a mighty stir throughout the kingdom at the time when it was in force.

As one has seen or heard, after the march of a great army, a number of rogues and loose characters bring up the rear; in like manner, at the tail of a great measure of State, follow many roguish personal interests, which are protected by the main body. The great measure of Reform, for instance, carried along with it much private jobbing and swindling—as could be shown were we not inclined to deal mildly with the Whigs; and this Enlistment Act, which, in order to maintain the British glories in Flanders, dealt most cruelly with the British people in England (it is not the first time that a man has been pinched at home to make a fine appearance abroad), created a great company of rascals and informers throughout the land, who lived upon it; or upon extortion from those who were subject to it, or not being subject to it were frightened into the belief that they were.

When Mr. Hayes and his lady had gone through the marriage ceremony at Worcester, the former, concluding that at such a place lodging and food might be procured at a cheaper rate, looked about carefully for the meanest public-house in the town, where he might deposit his bride.

In the kitchen of this inn, a party of men were drinking; and, as Mrs. Hayes declined, with a proper sense of her superiority, to eat in company with such low fellows, the landlady showed her and

her husband to an inner apartment, where they might be served in private.

The kitchen party seemed, indeed, not such as a lady would choose to join. There was one huge lanky fellow, that looked like

a soldier, and had a halberd; another was habited in a sailor's costume, with a fascinating patch over one eye; and a third, who seemed the leader of the gang, was a stout man in a sailor's frock and a horseman's jack-boots, whom one might fancy, if he were anything, to be a horse-marine.

Of one of these worthies, Mrs. Hayes thought she knew the figure and voice; and she found her conjectures were true, when, all of a sudden, three people, without "with your leave" or "by your leave," burst into the room, into which she and her spouse had retired. At their head was no other than her old friend, Mr. Peter Brock; he had his sword drawn, and his finger to his lips, enjoining silence, as it were, to Mrs. Catherine. He with the patch on his eye seized incontinently on Mr. Hayes; the tall man with the halberd kept the door; two or three heroes supported the one-eyed man; who, with a loud voice, exclaimed, "Down with your arms—no resistance! you are my prisoner, in the Queen's name!"

And here, at this lock, we shall leave the whole company until the next chapter; which may possibly explain what they were.

CHAPTER V.

CONTAINS MR. BROCK'S AUTOBIOGRAPHY, AND OTHER MATTER.

"YOU don't sure believe these men?" said Mrs. Hayes, as soon as the first alarm caused by the irruption of Mr. Brock and his companions had subsided. "These are no magistrate's men: it is but a trick to rob you of your money, John."

"I will never give up a farthing of it!" screamed Hayes.

"Yonder fellow," continued Mrs. Catherine, "I know, for all his drawn sword and fierce looks; his name is ——"

"Wood, madam, at your service!" said Mr. Brock. "I am follower to Mr. Justice Gobble, of this town: a'n't I, Tim?" said Mr. Brock to the tall halberd-man who was keeping the door.

"Yes, indeed," said Tim, archly; "we're all followers of his honour, Justice Gobble."

"Certainly!" said the one-eyed man.

"Of course!" cried the man in the nightcap.

"I suppose, madam, you're satisfied *now?*" continued Mr. Brock, *alias* Wood. "You can't deny the testimony of gentlemen like these; and our commission is to apprehend all able-bodied male persons who can give no good account of themselves, and enrol them in the service of her Majesty. Look at this Mr. Hayes" (who stood trembling in his shoes). "Can there be a bolder, properer, straighter gentleman? We'll have him for a grenadier before the day's over!"

"Take heart, John—don't be frightened. Psha! I tell you I

know the man," cried out Mrs. Hayes: "he is only here to extort money."

"Oh, for that matter, I *do* think I recollect the lady. Let me see; where was it? At Birmingham, I think,—ay, at Birmingham,—about the time when they tried to murder Count Gal——"

"Oh, sir!" here cried Madam Hayes, dropping her voice at once from a tone of scorn to one of gentlest entreaty, "what is it you want with my husband? I know not, indeed, if ever I saw you before. For what do you seize him? How much will you take to release him, and let us go? Name the sum; he is rich, and ——"

"*Rich*, Catherine!" cried Hayes. "Rich!—O heavens! Sir, I have nothing but my hands to support me: I am a poor carpenter, sir, working under my father!"

"He can give twenty guineas to be free; I know he can!" said Mrs. Cat.

"I have but a guinea to carry me home," sighed out Hayes.

"But you have twenty at home, John," said his wife. "Give these brave gentlemen a writing to your mother, and she will pay; and you will let us free then, gentlemen—won't you?"

"When the money's paid, yes," said the leader, Mr. Brock.

"Oh, in course," echoed the tall man with the halberd. "What's a thrifling detintion, my dear?" continued he, addressing Hayes. "We'll amuse you in your absence, and drink to the health of your pretty wife here."

This promise, to do the halberdier justice, he fulfilled. He called upon the landlady to produce the desired liquor; and when Mr. Hayes flung himself at that lady's feet, demanding succour from her, and asking whether there was no law in the land——

"There's no law at the 'Three Rooks' except *this!*" said Mr. Brock in reply, holding up a horse-pistol. To which the hostess, grinning, assented, and silently went her way.

After some further solicitations, John Hayes drew out the necessary letter to his father, stating that he was pressed, and would not be set free under a sum of twenty guineas; and that it would be of no use to detain the bearer of the letter, inasmuch as the gentlemen who had possession of him vowed that they would murder him should any harm befall their comrade. As a further proof of the authenticity of the letter, a token was added: a ring that Hayes wore, and that his mother had given him.

The missives were, after some consultation, entrusted to the care of the tall halberdier, who seemed to rank as second in command of

the forces that marched under Corporal Brock. This gentleman was called indifferently Ensign, Mr.. or even Captain Macshane; his intimates occasionally in sport called him Nosey, from the prominence of that feature in his countenance; or Spindleshins, for the very reason which brought on the first Edward a similar nickname. Mr. Macshane then quitted Worcester, mounted on Hayes's horse; leaving all parties at the "Three Rooks" not a little anxious for his return.

This was not to be expected until the next morning; and a weary *nuit de noces* did Mr. Hayes pass. Dinner was served, and, according to promise, Mr. Brock and his two friends enjoyed the meal along with the bride and bridegroom. Punch followed, and this was taken in company; then came supper. Mr. Brock alone partook of this, the other two gentlemen preferring the society of their pipes and the landlady in the kitchen.

"It is a sorry entertainment I confess," said the ex-corporal, "and a dismal way for a gentleman to spend his bridal night; but somebody must stay with you, my dears: for who knows but you might take a fancy to scream out of window, and then there would be murder, and the deuce and all to pay? One of us must stay, and my friends love a pipe, so you must put up with my company until they can relieve guard."

The reader will not, of course, expect that three people who were to pass the night, however unwillingly, together in an inn-room, should sit there dumb and moody, and without any personal communication; on the contrary, Mr. Brock, as an old soldier, entertained his prisoners with the utmost courtesy, and did all that lay in his power, by the help of liquor and conversation, to render their durance tolerable. On the bridegroom his attentions were a good deal thrown away: Mr. Hayes consented to drink copiously, but could not be made to talk much; and, in fact, the fright of the seizure, the fate hanging over him should his parents refuse a ransom, and the tremendous outlay of money which would take place should they accede to it, weighed altogether on his mind so much as utterly to unman it.

As for Mrs. Cat, I don't think she was at all sorry in her heart to see the old Corporal: for he had been a friend of old times—dear times to her; she had had from him, too, and felt for him not a little kindness; and there was really a very tender, innocent friendship subsisting between this pair of rascals, who relished much a night's conversation together.

The Corporal, after treating his prisoners to punch in great quantities, proposed the amusement of cards : over which Mr. Hayes had not been occupied more than an hour, when he found himself so excessively sleepy as to be persuaded to fling himself down on the bed dressed as he was, and there to snore away until morning.

Mrs. Catherine had no inclination for sleep ; and the Corporal, equally wakeful, plied incessantly the bottle, and held with her a great deal of conversation. The sleep, which was equivalent to the absence of John Hayes, took all restraint from their talk. She explained to Brock the circumstances of her marriage, which we have already described ; they wondered at the chance which had brought them together at the "Three Rooks ;" nor did Brock at all hesitate to tell her at once that his calling was quite illegal, and that his intention was simply to extort money. The worthy Corporal had not the slightest shame regarding his own profession, and cut many jokes with Mrs. Cat about her late one ; her attempt to murder the Count, and her future prospects as a wife.

And here, having brought him upon the scene again, we may as well shortly narrate some of the principal circumstances which befell him after his sudden departure from Birmingham ; and which he narrated with much candour to Mrs. Catherine.

He rode the Captain's horse to Oxford (having exchanged his military dress for a civil costume on the road), and at Oxford he disposed of " George of Denmark," a great bargain, to one of the heads of colleges. As soon as Mr. Brock, who took on himself the style and title of Captain Wood, had sufficiently examined the curiosities of the University, he proceeded at once to the capital : the only place for a gentleman of his fortune and figure.

Here he read, with a great deal of philosophical indifference, in the *Daily Post*, the *Courant*, the *Observator*, the *Gazette*, and the chief journals of those days, which he made a point of examining at " Button's " and "Will's," an accurate description of his person, his clothes, and the horse he rode, and a promise of fifty guineas' reward to any person who would give an account of him (so that he might be captured) to Captain Count Galgenstein at Birmingham, to Mr. Murfey at the " Golden Ball " in the Savoy, or Mr. Bates at the " Blew Anchor in Pickadilly." But Captain Wood, in an enormous full-bottomed periwig that cost him sixty pounds,* with high red heels

* In the ingenious contemporary history of Moll Flanders, a periwig is mentioned as costing that sum.

to his shoes, a silver sword, and a gold snuff-box, and a large wound (obtained, he said, at the siege of Barcelona), which disfigured much of his countenance, and caused him to cover one eye, was in small danger, he thought, of being mistaken for Corporal Brock, the deserter of Cutts's; and strutted along the Mall with as grave an air as the very best nobleman who appeared there. He was generally, indeed, voted to be very good company; and as his expenses were unlimited ("A few convent candlesticks, my dear," he used to whisper, "melt into a vast number of doubloons"), he commanded as good society as he chose to ask for; and it was speedily known as a fact throughout town, that Captain Wood, who had served under his Majesty Charles III. of Spain, had carried off the diamond petticoat of our Lady of Compostella, and lived upon the proceeds of the fraud. People were good Protestants in those days, and many a one longed to have been his partner in the pious plunder.

All surmises concerning his wealth, Captain Wood, with much discretion, encouraged. He contradicted no report, but was quite ready to confirm all; and when two different rumours were positively put to him, he used only to laugh, and say, "My dear sir, *I* don't make the stories; but I'm not called upon to deny them; and I give you fair warning, that I shall assent to every one of them; so you may believe them or not, as you please." And so he had the reputation of being a gentleman, not only wealthy, but discreet. In truth, it was almost a pity that worthy Brock had not been a gentleman born; in which case, doubtless, he would have lived and died as became his station; for he spent his money like a gentleman, he loved women like a gentleman, he would fight like a gentleman, he gambled and got drunk like a gentleman. What did he want else? Only a matter of six descents, a little money, and an estate, to render him the equal of St. John or Harley. "Ah, those were merry days!" would Mr. Brock say,—for he loved, in a good old age, to recount the story of his London fashionable campaign;—"and when I think how near I was to become a great man, and to die perhaps a general, I can't but marvel at the wicked obstinacy of my ill-luck."

"I will tell you what I did, my dear: I had lodgings in Piccadilly, as if I were a lord; I had two large periwigs, and three suits of laced clothes; I kept a little black dressed out like a Turk; I walked daily in the Mall; I dined at the politest ordinary in Covent Garden; I frequented the best of coffee-houses, and knew all the pretty fellows of the town; I cracked a bottle with Mr. Addison, and lent many a piece to Dick Steele (a sad debauched rogue, my dear); and, above all, I'll

tell you what I did—the noblest stroke that sure ever a gentleman performed in my situation

"One day, going into 'Will's,' I saw a crowd of gentlemen gathered

together, and heard one of them say, 'Captain Wood! I don't know the man; but there was a Captain Wood in Southwell's regiment.' Egad, it was my Lord Peterborough himself who was talking about me. So, putting off my hat, I made a most gracious *congé* to my lord, and said I knew *him*, and rode behind him at Barcelona on our entry into that town.

"'No doubt you did, Captain Wood,' says my lord, taking my hand; 'and no doubt you know me: for many more know Tom Fool, than Tom Fool knows.' And with this, at which all of us laughed, my lord called for a bottle, and he and I sat down and drank it together.

"Well, he was in disgrace, as you know, but he grew mighty fond of me, and—would you believe it?—nothing would satisfy him but presenting me at Court! Yes, to her sacred Majesty the Queen, and my Lady Marlborough, who was in high feather. Ay, truly, the sentinels on duty used to salute me as if I were Corporal John himself! I was on the high road to fortune. Charley Mordaunt used to call me Jack, and drink canary at my chambers; I used to make one at my Lord Treasurer's levee; I had even got Mr. Army-Secretary Walpole to take a hundred guineas as a compliment; and he had promised me a majority: when bad luck turned, and all my fine hopes were overthrown in a twinkling.

"You see, my dear, that after we had left that gaby, Galgenstein, —ha, ha,—with a gag in his mouth, and twopence-halfpenny in his pocket, the honest Count was in the sorriest plight in the world; owing money here and there to tradesmen, a cool thousand to the Warwickshire Squire: and all this on eighty pounds a year! Well, for a little time the tradesmen held their hands; while the jolly Count moved heaven and earth to catch hold of his dear Corporal and his dear money-bags over again, and placarded every town from London to Liverpool with descriptions of my pretty person. The bird was flown, however,—the money clean gone,—and when there was no hope of regaining it, what did the creditors do but clap my gay gentleman into Shrewsbury gaol: where I wish he had rotted, for my part.

"But no such luck for honest Peter Brock, or Captain Wood, as he was in those days. One blessed Monday I went to wait on Mr. Secretary, and he squeezed my hand and whispered to me that I was to be Major of a regiment in Virginia—the very thing: for you see, my dear, I didn't care about joining my Lord Duke in Flanders; being pretty well known to the army there. The Secretary squeezed my

hand (it had a fifty-pound bill in it) and wished me joy, and called me Major, and bowed me out of his closet into the ante-room; and, as gay as may be, I went off to the 'Tilt-yard Coffee-house' in Whitehall, which is much frequented by gentlemen of our profession, where I bragged not a little of my good luck.

"Amongst the company were several of my acquaintance, and amongst them a gentleman I did not much care to see, look you! I saw a uniform that I knew—red and yellow facings—Cutts's, my dear; and the wearer of this was no other than his Excellency Gustavus Adolphus Maximilian, whom we all know of!

"He stared me full in the face, right into my eye (t'other one was patched, you know); and after standing stock-still with his mouth open, gave a step back, and then a step forward, and then screeched out, 'It's Brock!'

"'I beg your pardon, sir,' says I; 'did you speak to me?'

"'I'll *swear* it's Brock,' cries Gal, as soon as he hears my voice, and laid hold of my cuff (a pretty bit of mechlin as ever you saw, by the way).

"'Sirrah!' says I, drawing it back, and giving my lord a little touch of the fist (just at the last button of the waistcoat, my dear,—a rare place if you wish to prevent a man from speaking too much: it sent him reeling to the other end of the room). 'Ruffian!' says I. 'Dog!' says I. 'Insolent puppy and coxcomb! what do you mean by laying your hand on me?'

"'Faith, Major, you giv him his *billyful*,' roared out a long Irish unattached ensign, that I had treated with many a glass of Nantz at the tavern. And so, indeed, I had; for the wretch could not speak for some minutes, and all the officers stood laughing at him, as he writhed and wriggled hideously.

"'Gentlemen, this is a monstrous scandal,' says one officer. 'Men of rank and honour at fists like a parcel of carters!'

"'Men of honour!' says the Count, who had fetched up his breath by this time. (I made for the door, but Macshane held me and said, 'Major, you are not going to shirk him, sure?' Whereupon I gripped his hand and vowed I would have the dog's life.'

"'Men of honour!' says the Count. 'I tell you the man is a deserter, a thief, and a swindler! He was my corporal, and ran away with a thou——"

"'Dog, you lie!' I roared out, and made another cut at him with my cane; but the gentlemen rushed between us.

"'O bluthanowns!' says honest Macshane, 'the lying scounthrel

this fellow is! Gentlemen, I swear be me honour that Captain Wood was wounded at Barcelona; and that I saw him there; and that he and I ran away together at the battle of Almanza, and bad luck to us.'

"You see, my dear, that these Irish have the strongest imaginations in the world; and that I had actually persuaded poor Mac that he and I were friends in Spain. Everybody knew Mac, who was a character in his way, and believed him.

"'Strike a gentleman!' says I. 'I'll have your blood, I will.'

"'This instant,' says the Count, who was boiling with fury; 'and where you like.'

"'Montague House,' says I. 'Good,' says he. And off we went. In good time too, for the constables came in at the thought of such a disturbance, and wanted to take us in charge.

"But the gentlemen present, being military men, would not hear of this. Out came Mac's rapier, and that of half-a-dozen others; and the constables were then told to do their duty if they liked, or to take a crown-piece and leave us to ourselves. Off they went; and presently, in a couple of coaches, the Count and his friends, I and mine, drove off to the fields behind Montague House. Oh, that vile coffee-house! why did I enter it?

"We came to the ground. Honest Macshane was my second, and much disappointed because the second on the other side would not make a fight of it, and exchange a few passes with him; but he was an old major, a cool old hand, as brave as steel, and no fool. Well, the swords are measured, Galgenstein strips off his doublet, and I my handsome cut-velvet in like fashion. Galgenstein flings off his hat, and I handed mine over—the lace on it cost me twenty pounds. I longed to be at him, for—curse him!—I hate him, and know that he has no chance with me at sword's-play.

"'You'll not fight in that periwig, sure?' says Macshane. 'Of course not,' says I, and took it off.

"May all barbers be roasted in flames; may all periwigs, bobwigs, scratchwigs, and Ramillies cocks, frizzle in purgatory from this day forth to the end of time! Mine was the ruin of me: what might I not have been now but for that wig?

"I gave it over to Ensign Macshane, and with it went what I had quite forgotten, the large patch which I wore over one eye, which popped out fierce, staring, and lively as was ever any eye in the world.

"'Come on!' says I, and made a lunge at my Count; but he

sprang back, (the dog was as active as a hare, and knew, from old times, that I was his master with the small-sword,) and his second, wondering, struck up my blade.

"'I will not fight that man,' says he, looking mighty pale. 'I swear upon my honour that his name is Peter Brock: he was for two years my corporal, and deserted, running away with a thousand pounds of my moneys. Look at the fellow! what is the matter with his eye? why did he wear a patch over it? But stop!' says he. 'I have more proof. Hand me my pocket-book.' And from it, sure enough, he produced the infernal proclamation announcing my desertion! 'See if the fellow has a scar across his left ear' (and I can't say, my dear, but what I have: it was done by a cursed Dutchman at the Boyne). 'Tell me if he has not got C.R. in blue upon his right arm' (and there it is sure enough). 'Yonder swaggering Irishman may be his accomplice for what I know; but I will have no dealings with Mr. Brock, save with a constable for a second.'

"'This is an odd story, Captain Wood,' said the old Major, who acted for the Count.

"'A scounthrelly falsehood regarding me and my friend!' shouted out Mr. Macshane; 'and the Count shall answer for it.'

"'Stop, stop,' says the Major. 'Captain Wood is too gallant a gentleman, I am sure, not to satisfy the Count; and will show us that he has no such mark on his arm as only private soldiers put there.'

"'Captain Wood,' says I, 'will do no such thing, Major. I'll fight that scoundrel Galgenstein, or you, or any of you, like a man of honour; but I won't submit to be searched like a thief!'

"'No, in coorse,' said Macshane.

"'I must take my man off the ground,' says the Major.

"'Well, take him, sir,' says I, in a rage, 'and just let me have the pleasure of telling him that he's a coward and a liar; and that my lodgings are in Piccadilly, where, if ever he finds courage to meet me, he may hear of me!'

"'Faugh! I shpit on ye all,' cries my gallant ally Macshane. And sure enough he kept his word, or all but—suiting the action to it at any rate.

"And so we gathered up our clothes, and went back in our separate coaches, and no blood spilt.

"'And is it thrue now,' said Mr. Macshane, when we were alone—'is it thrue now, all these divvles have been saying?'

"'Ensign,' says I, 'you're a man of the world?'

"''Deed and I am, and Insign these twenty-two years.'

"'Perhaps you'd like a few pieces?' says I.

"'Faith and I should; for, to tell you the secred thrut, I've not tasted mate these four days.'

"'Well then, Ensign, it *is* true,' says I; 'and as for meat, you shall have some at the first cook-shop.' I bade the coach stop until he bought a plateful, which he ate in the carriage, for my time was precious. I just told him the whole story: at which he laughed, and swore that it was the best piece of *generalship* he ever heard on. When his belly was full, I took out a couple of guineas and gave them to him. Mr. Macshane began to cry at this, and kissed me, and swore he never would desert me: as, indeed, my dear, I don't think he will; for we have been the best of friends ever since, and he's the only man I ever could trust, I think.

"I don't know what put it into my head, but I had a scent of some mischief in the wind; so stopped the coach a little before I got home, and, turning into a tavern, begged Macshane to go before me to my lodging, and see if the coast was clear: which he did; and came back to me as pale as death, saying that the house was full of constables. The cursed quarrel at the Tilt-yard had, I suppose, set the beaks upon me; and a pretty sweep they made of it. Ah, my dear! five hundred pounds in money, five suits of laced clothes, three periwigs, besides laced shirts, swords, canes, and snuff-boxes; and all to go back to that scoundrel Count.

"It was all over with me, I saw—no more being a gentleman for me; and if I remained to be caught, only a choice between Tyburn and a file of grenadiers. My love, under such circumstances, a gentleman can't be particular, and must be prompt: the livery-stable was hard by where I used to hire my coach to go to Court,—ha! ha!—and was known as a man of substance. Thither I went immediately. 'Mr. Warmmash,' says I, 'my gallant friend here and I have a mind for a ride and a supper at Twickenham, so you must lend us a pair of your best horses.' Which he did in a twinkling, and off we rode.

"We did not go into the Park, but turned off and cantered smartly up towards Kilburn; and, when we got into the country, galloped as if the devil were at our heels. Bless you, my love, it was all done in a minute: and the Ensign and I found ourselves regular knights of the road, before we knew where we were almost. Only think of our finding you and your new husband at the 'Three Rooks!' There's not a greater fence than the landlady in all the country. It was she that put us on seizing your husband, and introduced us to the

other two gentlemen, whose names I don't know any more than the dead."

* * * * *

"And what became of the horses?" said Mrs. Catherine to Mr. Brock, when his tale was finished.

"Rips, madam," said he; "mere rips. We sold them at Stourbridge fair, and got but thirteen guineas for the two."

"And—and—the Count, Max; where is he, Brock?" sighed she.

"Whew!" whistled Mr. Brock. "What, hankering after him still? My dear, he is off to Flanders with his regiment; and I make no doubt, there have been twenty Countesses of Galgenstein since your time."

"I don't believe any such thing, sir," said Mrs. Catherine, starting up very angrily.

"If you did, I suppose you'd laudanum him; wouldn't you?"

"Leave the room, fellow," said the lady. But she recollected herself speedily again; and, clasping her hands, and looking very wretched at Brock, at the ceiling, at the floor, at her husband (from whom she violently turned away her head), she began to cry piteously: to which tears the Corporal set up a gentle accompaniment of whistling, as they trickled one after another down her nose.

I don't think they were tears of repentance; but of regret for the time when she had her first love, and her fine clothes, and her white hat and blue feather. Of the two, the Corporal's whistle was much more innocent than the girl's sobbing: he was a rogue; but a good-natured old fellow, when his humour was not crossed. Surely our novel-writers make a great mistake in divesting their rascals of all gentle human qualities; they have such—and the only sad point to think of is, in all private concerns of life, abstract feelings, and dealings with friends, and so on, how dreadfully like a rascal is to an honest man. The man who murdered the Italian boy, set him first to play with his children whom he loved, and who doubtless deplored his loss.

CHAPTER VI.

THE ADVENTURES OF THE AMBASSADOR, MR. MACSHANE.

IF we had not been obliged to follow history in all respects, it is probable that we should have left out the last adventure of Mrs. Catherine and her husband, at the inn at Worcester, altogether; for, in truth, very little came of it, and it is not very romantic or striking. But we are bound to stick closely, above all, by THE TRUTH—the truth, though it be not particularly pleasant to read of or to tell. As anybody may read in the "Newgate Calendar," Mr. and Mrs. Hayes were taken at an inn at Worcester; were confined there; were swindled by persons who pretended to impress the bridegroom for military service. What is one to do after that? Had we been writing novels instead of authentic histories, we might have carried them anywhere else we chose: and we had a great mind to make Hayes philosophizing with Bolingbroke, like a certain Devereux; and Mrs. Catherine *maîtresse en titre* to Mr. Alexander Pope, Doctor Sacheverel, Sir John Reade the oculist, Dean Swift, or Marshal Tallard; as the very commonest romancer would under such circumstances. But alas and alas! truth must be spoken, whatever else is in the wind; and the excellent "Newgate Calendar," which contains the biographies and thanatographies of Hayes and his wife, does not say a word of their connexions with any of the leading literary or military heroes of the time of her Majesty Queen Anne. The "Calendar" says, in so many words, that Hayes was obliged to send to his father in

Warwickshire for money to get him out of the scrape, and that the old gentleman came down to his aid. By this truth must we stick; and not for the sake of the most brilliant episode,—no, not for a bribe of twenty extra guineas per sheet, would we depart from it.

Mr. Brock's account of his adventure in London has given the reader some short notice of his friend, Mr. Macshane. Neither the wits nor the principles of that worthy Ensign were particularly firm: for drink, poverty, and a crack on the skull at the battle of Steenkirk had served to injure the former; and the Ensign was not in his best days possessed of any share of the latter. He had really, at one period, held such a rank in the army, but pawned his half-pay for drink and play; and for many years past had lived, one of the hundred thousand miracles of our city, upon nothing that anybody knew of, or of which he himself could give any account. Who has not a catalogue of these men in his list? who can tell whence comes the occasional clean shirt, who supplies the continual means of drunkenness, who wards off the daily-impending starvation? Their life is a wonder from day to day: their breakfast a wonder; their dinner a miracle; their bed an interposition of Providence. If you and I, my dear sir, want a shilling to-morrow, who will give it us? Will *our* butchers give us mutton-chops? will *our* laundresses clothe us in clean linen?—not a bone or a rag. Standing as we do (may it be ever so) somewhat removed from want,* is there one of us who does not shudder at the thought of descending into the lists to combat with it, and expect anything but to be utterly crushed in the encounter?

Not a bit of it, my dear sir. It takes much more than you think for to starve a man. Starvation is very little when you are used to it. Some people I know even, who live on it quite comfortably, and make their daily bread by it. It had been our friend Macshane's sole profession for many years; and he did not fail to draw from it such a livelihood as was sufficient, and perhaps too good, for him. He managed to dine upon it a certain or rather uncertain number of days in the week, to sleep somewhere, and to get drunk at least three hundred times a year. He was known to one or two noblemen who occasionally helped him with a few pieces, and whom he helped in turn—never mind how. He had other acquaintances whom he pestered undauntedly; and from whom he occasionally extracted a dinner, or a crown, or mayhap, by mistake, a gold-headed cane, which

* The author, it must be remembered, has his lodgings and food provided for him by the government of his country.

found its way to the pawnbroker's. When flush of cash, he would appear at the coffee-house; when low in funds, the deuce knows into what mystic caves and dens he slunk for food and lodging. He was perfectly ready with his sword, and when sober, or better still, a very little tipsy, was a complete master of it; in the art of boasting and lying he had hardly any equals; in shoes he stood six feet five inches; and here is his complete *signalement*. It was a fact that he had been in Spain as a volunteer, where he had shown some gallantry, had had a brain-fever, and was sent home to starve as before.

Mr. Macshane had, however, like Mr. Conrad, the Corsair, one virtue in the midst of a thousand crimes,—he was faithful to his employer for the time being: and a story is told of him, which may or may not be to his credit, viz., that being hired on one occasion by a certain lord to inflict a punishment upon a *roturier* who had crossed his lordship in his amours, he, Macshane, did actually refuse from the person to be belaboured, and who entreated his forbearance, a larger sum of money than the nobleman gave him for the beating; which he performed punctually, as bound in honour and friendship. This tale would the Ensign himself relate, with much self-satisfaction; and when, after the sudden flight from London, he and Brock took to their roving occupation, he cheerfully submitted to the latter as his commanding officer, called him always Major, and, bating blunders and drunkenness, was perfectly true to his leader. He had a notion —and, indeed, I don't know that it was a wrong one—that his profession was now, as before, strictly military, and according to the rules of honour. Robbing he called plundering the enemy; and hanging was, in his idea, a dastardly and cruel advantage that the latter took, and that called for the sternest reprisals.

The other gentlemen concerned were strangers to Mr. Brock, who felt little inclined to trust either of them upon such a message, or with such a large sum to bring back. They had, strange to say, a similar mistrust on their side; but Mr. Brock lugged out five guineas, which he placed in the landlady's hand as security for his comrade's return; and Ensign Macshane, being mounted on poor Hayes's own horse, set off to visit the parents of that unhappy young man. It was a gallant sight to behold our thieves' ambassador, in a faded sky-blue suit with orange facings, in a pair of huge jack-boots unconscious of blacking, with a mighty basket-hilted sword by his side, and a little shabby beaver cocked over a large tow-periwig, ride out from the inn of the "Three Rooks" on his mission to Hayes's paternal village.

It was eighteen miles distant from Worcester; but Mr. Macshane performed the distance in safety, and in sobriety moreover (for such had been his instructions), and had no difficulty in discovering the house of old Hayes: towards which, indeed, John's horse trotted incontinently. Mrs. Hayes, who was knitting at the house-door, was not a little surprised at the appearance of the well-known grey gelding, and of the stranger mounted upon it.

Flinging himself off the steed with much agility, Mr. Macshane, as soon as his feet reached the ground, brought them rapidly together, in order to make a profound and elegant bow to Mrs. Hayes; and slapping his greasy beaver against his heart, and poking his periwig almost into the nose of the old lady, demanded whether he had the "shooprame honour of adthressing Misthriss Hees?"

Having been answered in the affirmative, he then proceeded to ask whether there was a blackguard boy in the house who would take "the horse to the steeble;" whether "he could have a dthrink of small-beer or buthermilk, being, faith, uncommon dthry;" and whether, finally, "he could be feevored with a few minutes' private conversation with her and Mr. Hees, on a matther of consitherable impartance?" All these preliminaries were to be complied with before Mr. Macshane would enter at all into the subject of his visit. The horse and man were cared for; Mr. Hayes was called in; and not a little anxious did Mrs. Hayes grow, in the meanwhile, with regard to the fate of her darling son. "Where is he? How is he? Is he dead?" said the old lady. "O yes, I'm sure he's dead!"

"Indeed, madam, and you're misteeken intirely: the young man is perfectly well in health."

"Oh, praised be heaven!"

"But mighty cast down in sperrits. To misfortunes, madam, look you, the best of us are subject; and a trifling one has fell upon your son."

And herewith Mr. Macshane produced a letter in the handwriting of young Hayes, of which we have had the good luck to procure a copy. It ran thus:—

"HONORED FATHER AND MOTHER,—The bearer of this is a kind gentleman, who has left me in a great deal of trouble. Yesterday, at this towne, I fell in with some gentlemen of the queene's servas; after drinking with whom, I accepted her Majesty's mony to enliste. Repenting thereof, I did endeavour to escape; and, in so doing, had the misfortune to strike my superior officer, whereby I made myself

liable to Death, according to the rules of warr. If, however, I pay twenty ginnys, all will be wel. You must give the same to the barer, els I shall be shott without fail on Tewsday morning. And so no more from your loving son,

"*From my prison at Bristol, this unhappy Monday.*" "JOHN HAYES.

When Mrs. Hayes read this pathetic missive, its success with her was complete, and she was for going immediately to the cupboard, and producing the money necessary for her darling son's release. But the carpenter Hayes was much more suspicious. "I don't know you, sir," said he to the ambassador.

"Do you doubt my honour, sir?" said the Ensign, very fiercely.

"Why, sir," replied Mr. Hayes, "I know little about it one way or other, but shall take it for granted, if you will explain a little more of this business."

"I sildom condescind to explean," said Mr. Macshane, "for it's not the custom in my rank; but I'll explean anything in reason."

"Pray, will you tell me in what regiment my son is enlisted?"

"In coorse. In Colonel Wood's fut, my dear; and a gallant corps it is as any in the army."

"And you left him?"

"On me soul, only three hours ago, having rid like a horse-jockey ever since; as in the sacred cause of humanity, curse me, every man should."

As Hayes's house was seventy miles from Bristol, the old gentleman thought this was marvellous quick riding, and so cut the conversation short. "You have said quite enough, sir," said he, "to show me there is some roguery in the matter, and that the whole story is false from beginning to end."

At this abrupt charge the Ensign looked somewhat puzzled, and then spoke with much gravity. "Roguery," said he, "Misthur Hees, is a sthrong term; and which, in consideration of my friendship for your family, I shall pass over. You doubt your son's honour, as there wrote by him in black and white?"

"You have forced him to write," said Mr. Hayes.

"The sly old divvle's right," muttered Mr. Macshane, aside. "Well, sir, to make a clean breast of it, he *has* been forced to write it. The story about the enlistment is a pretty fib, if you will, from beginning to end. And what then, my dear? Do you think your son's any better off for that?"

"Oh, where is he?" screamed Mrs. Hayes, plumping down on her knees. "We *will* give him the money, won't we, John?"

"I know you will, madam, when I tell you where he is. He is in the hands of some gentlemen of my acquaintance, who are at war with the present government, and no more care about cutting a man's throat than they do a chicken's. He is a prisoner, madam, of our sword and spear. If you choose to ransom him, well and good; if not, peace be with him! for never more shall you see him."

"And how do I know you won't come back to-morrow for more money?" asked Mr. Hayes.

"Sir, you have my honour; and I'd as lieve break my neck as my word," said Mr. Macshane, gravely. "Twenty guineas is the bargain. Take ten minutes to talk of it—take it then, or leave it; it's all the same to me, my dear." And it must be said of our friend the Ensign, that he meant every word he said, and that he considered the embassy on which he had come as perfectly honourable and regular.

"And pray, what prevents us," said Mr. Hayes, starting up in a rage, "from taking hold of you, as a surety for him?"

"You wouldn't fire on a flag of truce, would ye, you dishonourable ould civilian?" replied Mr. Macshane. "Besides," says he, "there's more reasons to prevent you: the first is this," pointing to his sword; "here are two more"—and these were pistols; "and the last and the best of all is, that you might hang me and dthraw me and quarther me, and yet never see so much as the tip of your son's nose again. Look you, sir, we run mighty risks in our profession—it's not all play, I can tell you. We're obliged to be punctual, too, or it's all up with the thrade. If I promise that your son will die as sure as fate to-morrow morning, unless I return home safe, our people *must* keep my promise; or else what chance is there for me? You would be down upon me in a moment with a posse of constables, and have me swinging before Warwick gaol. Pooh, my dear! you never would sacrifice a darling boy like John Hayes, let alone his lady, for the sake of my long carcass. One or two of our gentlemen have been taken that way already, because parents and guardians would not believe them."

"*And what became of the poor children?*" said Mrs. Hayes, who began to perceive the gist of the argument, and to grow dreadfully frightened.

"Don't let's talk of them, ma'm: humanity shudthers at the thought!" And herewith Mr. Macshane drew his finger across his throat, in such a dreadful way as to make the two parents tremble.

"It's the way of war, madam, look you. The service I have the honour to belong to is not paid by the Queen; and so we're obliged to make our prisoners pay, according to established military practice."

No lawyer could have argued his case better than Mr. Macshane so far; and he completely succeeded in convincing Mr. and Mrs. Hayes of the necessity of ransoming their son. Promising that the young man should be restored to them next morning, along with his beautiful lady, he courteously took leave of the old couple, and made the best of his way back to Worcester again. The elder Hayes wondered who the lady could be of whom the ambassador had spoken, for their son's elopement was altogether unknown to them; but anger or doubt about this subject was overwhelmed by their fears for their darling John's safety. Away rode the gallant Macshane with the money necessary to effect this; and it must be mentioned, as highly to his credit, that he never once thought of appropriating the sum to himself, or of deserting his comrades in any way.

His ride from Worcester had been a long one. He had left that city at noon, but before his return thither the sun had gone down; and the landscape, which had been dressed like a prodigal, in purple and gold, now appeared like a Quaker, in dusky grey; and the trees by the road-side grew black as undertakers or physicians, and, bending their solemn heads to each other, whispered ominously among themselves; and the mists hung on the common; and the cottage lights went out one by one; and the earth and heaven grew black, but for some twinkling useless stars, which freckled the ebon countenance of the latter; and the air grew colder; and about two o'clock the moon appeared, a dismal, pale-faced rake, walking solitary through the deserted sky; and about four, mayhap, the Dawn (wretched 'prentice-boy!) opened in the east the shutters of the Day:—in other words, more than a dozen hours had passed. Corporal Brock had been relieved by Mr. Redcap, the latter by Mr. Sicklop, the one-eyed gentleman; Mrs. John Hayes, in spite of her sorrows and bashfulness, had followed the example of her husband, and fallen asleep by his side—slept for many hours—and awakened still under the guardianship of Mr. Brock's troop; and all parties began anxiously to expect the return of the ambassador, Mr. Macshane.

That officer, who had performed the first part of his journey with such distinguished prudence and success, found the night, on his journey homewards, was growing mighty cold and dark; and as he was thirsty and hungry, had money in his purse, and saw no cause to hurry, he determined to take refuge at an alehouse for the night, and

to make for Worcester by dawn the next morning. He accordingly alighted at the first inn on his road, consigned his horse to the stable, and entering the kitchen, called for the best liquor in the house.

A small company was assembled at the inn, among whom Mr. Macshane took his place with a great deal of dignity; and having a considerable sum of money in his pocket, felt a mighty contempt for his society, and soon let them know the contempt he felt for them. After a third flagon of ale, he discovered that the liquor was sour, and emptied, with much spluttering and grimaces, the remainder of the beer into the fire. This process so offended the parson of the parish (who in those good old times did not disdain to take the post of honour in the chimney-nook), that he left his corner, looking wrathfully at the offender; who without any more ado instantly occupied it. It was a fine thing to hear the jingling of the twenty pieces in his pocket, the oaths which he distributed between the landlord, the guests, and the liquor—to remark the sprawl of his mighty jack-boots, before the sweep of which the timid guests edged further and further away; and the languishing leers which he cast on the landlady, as with wide-spread arms he attempted to seize upon her.

When the ostler had done his duties in the stable, he entered the inn, and whispered the landlord that "the stranger was riding John Hayes's horse:" of which fact the host soon convinced himself, and did not fail to have some suspicions of his guest. Had he not thought that times were unquiet, horses might be sold, and one man's money was as good as another's, he probably would have arrested the Ensign immediately, and so lost all the profit of the score which the latter was causing every moment to be enlarged.

In a couple of hours, with that happy facility which one may have often remarked in men of the gallant Ensign's nation, he had managed to disgust every one of the landlord's other guests, and scare them from the kitchen. Frightened by his addresses, the landlady too had taken flight; and the host was the only person left in the apartment; who there stayed for interest's sake merely, and listened moodily to his tipsy guest's conversation. In an hour more, the whole house was awakened by a violent noise of howling, curses, and pots clattering to and fro. Forth issued Mrs. Landlady in her night-gear, out came John Ostler with his pitchfork, downstairs tumbled Mrs. Cook and one or two guests, and found the landlord and ensign on the kitchen-floor—the wig of the latter lying, much singed and emitting strange odours, in the fireplace, his face hideously distorted, and a great quantity of his natural hair in the partial occupation of the landlord; who had drawn

it and the head down towards him, in order that he might have the benefit of pummelling the latter more at his ease. In revenge, the landlord was undermost, and the Ensign's arms were working up and down his face and body like the flaps of a paddle-wheel: the man of war had clearly the best of it.

The combatants were separated as soon as possible; but as soon as the excitement of the fight was over, Ensign Macshane was found to have no further powers of speech, sense, or locomotion, and was carried by his late antagonist to bed. His sword and pistols, which had been placed at his side at the commencement of the evening, were carefully put by, and his pocket visited. Twenty guineas in gold, a large knife—used, probably, for the cutting of bread-and-cheese—some crumbs of those delicacies and a paper of tobacco found in the breeches-pockets, and in the bosom of the sky-blue coat the leg of a cold fowl and half of a raw onion, constituted his whole property.

These articles were not very suspicious; but the beating which the landlord had received tended greatly to confirm his own and his wife's doubts about their guest; and it was determined to send off in the early morning to Mr. Hayes, informing him how a person had lain at their inn who had ridden thither mounted upon young Hayes's horse. Off set John Ostler at earliest dawn; but on his way he woke up Mr. Justice's clerk, and communicated his suspicions to him; and Mr. Clerk consulted with the village baker, who was always up early; and the clerk, the baker, the butcher with his cleaver, and two gentlemen who were going to work, all adjourned to the inn.

Accordingly, when Ensign Macshane was in a truckle-bed, plunged in that deep slumber which only innocence and drunkenness enjoy in this world, and charming the ears of morn by the regular and melodious music of his nose, a vile plot was laid against him; and when about seven of the clock he woke, he found, on sitting up in his bed, three gentlemen on each side of it, armed, and looking ominous. One held a constable's staff, and, albeit, unprovided with a warrant, would take upon himself the responsibility of seizing Mr. Macshane, and of carrying him before his worship at the hall.

"Taranouns, man!" said the Ensign, springing up in bed, and abruptly breaking off a loud, sonorous yawn, with which he had opened the business of the day, "you won't deteen a gentleman who's on life and death? I give ye my word, an affair of honour."

"How came you by that there horse?" said the baker.

"How came you by these here fifteen guineas?" said the landlord,

in whose hands, by some process, five of the gold pieces had disappeared.

"What is this here idolatrous string of beads?" said the clerk.

Mr. Macshane, the fact is, was a Catholic, but did not care to own it: for in those days his religion was not popular. "Baids? Holy Mother of saints! give me back them baids," said Mr. Macshane, clasping his hands. "They were blest, I tell you, by his holiness the po——psha! I mane they belong to a darling little daughter I had that's in heaven now: and as for the money and the horse, I should like to know how a gentleman is to travel in this counthry without them?"

"Why, you see, he may travel in the country to *git* 'em," here shrewdly remarked the constable; "and it's our belief that neither horse nor money is honestly come by. If his worship is satisfied, why so, in course, shall we be; but there is highwaymen abroad, look you; and, to our notion, you have very much the cut of one."

Further remonstrances or threats on the part of Mr. Macshane were useless. Although he vowed that he was first-cousin to the Duke of Leinster, an officer in her Majesty's service, and the dearest friend Lord Marlborough had, his impudent captors would not believe a word of his statement (which, further, was garnished with a tremendous number of oaths); and he was, about eight o'clock, carried up to the house of Squire Ballance, the neighbouring justice of the peace.

When the worthy magistrate asked the crime of which the prisoner had been guilty, the captors looked somewhat puzzled for the moment; since, in truth, it could not be shown that the Ensign had committed any crime at all; and if he had confined himself to simple silence, and thrown upon them the onus of proving his misdemeanors, Justice Ballance must have let him loose, and soundly rated his clerk and the landlord for detaining an honest gentleman on so frivolous a charge.

But this caution was not in the Ensign's disposition; and though his accusers produced no satisfactory charge against him, his own words were quite enough to show how suspicious his character was. When asked his name, he gave it in as Captain Geraldine, on his way to Ireland, by Bristol, on a visit to his cousin the Duke of Leinster. He swore solemnly that his friends, the Duke of Marlborough and Lord Peterborough, under both of whom he had served, should hear of the manner in which he had been treated; and when the justice,—a sly old gentleman, and one that read the *Gazettes*,—asked him at what

battles he had been present, the gallant Ensign pitched on a couple in Spain and in Flanders, which had been fought within a week of each other, and vowed that he had been desperately wounded at both; so that, at the end of his examination, which had been taken down by the clerk, he had been made to acknowledge as follows:—Captain Geraldine, six feet four inches in height; thin, with a very long red nose, and red hair; grey eyes, and speaks with a strong Irish accent; is the first-cousin of the Duke of Leinster, and in constant communication with him: does not know whether his Grace has any children; does not know whereabouts he lives in London; cannot say what sort of a looking man his Grace is: is acquainted with the Duke of Marlborough, and served in the dragoons at the battle of Ramillies; at which time he was with my Lord Peterborough before Barcelona. Borrowed the horse which he rides from a friend in London, three weeks since. Peter Hobbs, ostler, swears that it was in his master's stable four days ago, and is the property of John Hayes, carpenter. Cannot account for the fifteen guineas found on him by the landlord; says they were twenty; says he won them at cards, a fortnight since, at Edinburgh; says he is riding about the country for his amusement: afterwards says he is on a matter of life and death, and going to Bristol; declared last night, in the hearing of several witnesses, that he was going to York; says he is a man of independent property, and has large estates in Ireland, and a hundred thousand pounds in the Bank of England. Has no shirt or stockings, and the coat he wears is marked "S.S." In his boots is written "Thomas Rodgers," and in his hat is the name of the "Rev. Doctor Snoffler."

Doctor Snoffler lived at Worcester, and had lately advertised in the *Hue and Cry* a number of articles taken from his house. Mr. Macshane said, in reply to this, that his hat had been changed at the inn, and he was ready to take his oath that he came thither in a gold-laced one. But this fact was disproved by the oaths of many persons who had seen him at the inn. And he was about to be imprisoned for the thefts which he had not committed (the fact about the hat being, that he had purchased it from a gentleman at the "Three Rooks" for two pints of beer)—he was about to be remanded, when, behold, Mrs. Hayes the elder made her appearance; and to her it was that the Ensign was indebted for his freedom.

Old Hayes had gone to work before the ostler arrived; but when his wife heard the lad's message, she instantly caused her pillion to be placed behind the saddle, and mounting the grey horse, urged the stable-boy to gallop as hard as ever he could to the justice's house.

She entered panting and alarmed. "Oh, what is your honour going to do to this honest gentleman?" said she. "In the name of heaven, let him go! His time is precious—he has important business—business of life and death."

"I tould the jidge so," said the Ensign, "but he refused to take my word—the sacred wurrd of honour of Captain Geraldine."

Macshane was good at a single lie, though easily flustered on an examination; and this was a very creditable stratagem to acquaint Mrs. Hayes with the name that he bore.

"What! you know Captain Geraldine?" said Mr Ballance, who was perfectly well acquainted with the carpenter's wife.

"In coorse she does. Hasn't she known me these tin years? Are we not related? Didn't she give me the very horse which I rode, and, to make belave, tould you I'd bought in London?"

"Let her tell her own story. Are you related to Captain Geraldine, Mrs. Hayes?"

"Yes—oh, yes!"

"A very elegant connexion! And you gave him the horse, did you, of your own free-will?"

"Oh, yes! of my own will—I would give him anything. Do, do, your honour, let him go! His child is dying," said the old lady, bursting into tears. "It may be dead before he gets to—before he gets there. Oh, your honour, your honour, pray, pray, don't detain him!"

The justice did not seem to understand this excessive sympathy on the part of Mrs. Hayes; nor did the father himself appear to be nearly so affected by his child's probable fate as the honest woman who interested herself for him. On the contrary, when she made this passionate speech, Captain Geraldine only grinned and said, 'Niver mind, my dear. If his honour will keep an honest gentleman for doing nothing, why let him—the law must settle between us; and as for the child, poor thing, the Lord deliver it!"

At this, Mrs. Hayes fell to entreating more loudly than ever; and as there was really no charge against him, Mr. Ballance was constrained to let him go.'

The landlord and his friends were making off, rather confused, when Ensign Macshane called upon the former in a thundering voice to stop, and refund the five guineas which he had stolen from him. Again the host swore there were but fifteen in his pocket. But when, on the Bible, the Ensign solemnly vowed that he had twenty, and called upon Mrs. Hayes to say whether yesterday, half-an-hour before

he entered the inn, she had not seen him with twenty guineas, and that lady expressed herself ready to swear that she had, Mr. Landlord looked more crestfallen than ever, and said that he had not counted the money when he took it; and though he did in his soul believe that there were only fifteen guineas, rather than be suspected of a shabby action, he would pay the five guineas out of his own pocket: which he did, and with the Ensign's, or rather Mrs. Hayes's own coin.

As soon as they were out of the justice's house, Mr. Macshane, in the fulness of his gratitude, could not help bestowing an embrace upon Mrs. Hayes. And when she implored him to let her ride behind him to her darling son, he yielded with a very good grace, and off the pair set on John Hayes's grey.

* * * * *

"Who has Nosey brought with him now?" said Mr. Sicklop, Brock's one-eyed confederate, who, about three hours after the above adventure, was lolling in the yard of the "Three Rooks." It was our Ensign, with the mother of his captive. They had not met with any accident in their ride.

"I shall now have the shooprame bliss," said Mr. Macshane, with much feeling, as he lifted Mrs. Hayes from the saddle—"the shooprame bliss of intwining two harrts that are mead for one another. Ours, my dear, is a dismal profession; but ah! don't moments like this make aminds for years of pain? This way, my dear. Turn to your right, then to your left—mind the stip—and the third door round the corner."

All these precautions were attended to; and after giving his concerted knock, Mr. Macshane was admitted into an apartment, which he entered holding his gold pieces in the one hand, and a lady by the other.

We shall not describe the meeting which took place between mother and son. The old lady wept copiously; the young man was really glad to see his relative, for he deemed that his troubles were over. Mrs. Cat bit her lips, and stood aside, looking somewhat foolish; Mr. Brock counted the money; and Mr. Macshane took a large dose of strong waters, as a pleasing solace for his labours, dangers, and fatigue.

When the maternal feelings were somewhat calmed, the old lady had leisure to look about her, and really felt a kind of friendship and goodwill for the company of thieves in which she found herself. It

seemed to her that they had conferred an actual favour on her, in robbing her of twenty guineas, threatening her son's life, and finally letting him go.

"Who is that droll old gentleman?" said she; and being told that it was Captain Wood, she dropped him a curtsey, and said, with much respect, "Captain, your very humble servant;" which compliment Mr. Brock acknowledged by a gracious smile and bow. "And who is this pretty young lady?" continued Mrs. Hayes.

"Why—hum—oh—mother, you must give her your blessing. She is Mrs. John Hayes." And herewith Mr. Hayes brought forward his interesting lady, to introduce her to his mamma.

The news did not at all please the old lady; who received Mrs. Catherine's embrace with a very sour face indeed. However, the mischief was done; and she was too glad to get back her son to be, on such an occasion, very angry with him. So, after a proper rebuke, she told Mrs. John Hayes that though she never approved of her son's attachment, and thought he married below his condition, yet as the evil was done, it was their duty to make the best of it; and she, for her part, would receive her into her house, and make her as comfortable there as she could.

"I wonder whether she has any more money in that house?" whispered Mr. Sicklop to Mr. Redcap; who, with the landlady, had come to the door of the room, and had been amusing themselves by the contemplation of this sentimental scene.

"What a fool that wild Hirishman was not to bleed her for more!" said the landlady; "but he's a poor ignorant Papist. I'm sure my man" (this gentleman had been hanged) "wouldn't have come away with such a beggarly sum."

"Suppose we have some more out of 'em?" said Mr. Redcap. "What prevents us? We have got the old mare, and the colt too,—ha! ha!—and the pair of 'em ought to be worth at least a hundred to us."

This conversation was carried on *sottovoce;* and I don't know whether Mr. Brock had any notion of the plot which was arranged by the three worthies. The landlady began it. "Which punch, madam, will you take?" says she. "You must have something for the good of the house, now you are in it."

"In coorse," said the Ensign.

"Certainly," said the other three. But the old lady said she was anxious to leave the place; and putting down a crown-piece, requested the hostess to treat the gentlemen in her absence. "Good-bye, Captain," said the old lady.

"Ajew!" cried the Ensign, "and long life to you, my dear. You got me out of a scrape at the justice's yonder; and, split me! but Insign Macshane will remimber it as long as he lives."

And now Hayes and the two ladies made for the door; but the landlady placed herself against it, and Mr. Sicklop said, "No, no, my pretty madams, you ain't a-going off so cheap as that neither; you are not going out for a beggarly twenty guineas, look you,—we must have more."

Mr. Hayes starting back, and cursing his fate, fairly burst into tears; the two women screamed; and Mr. Brock looked as if the proposition both amused and had been expected by him: but not so Ensign Macshane.

"Major!" said he, clawing fiercely hold of Brock's arms.

"Ensign," said Mr. Brock, smiling.

"Arr we, or arr we not, men of honour?"

"Oh, in coorse," said Brock, laughing, and using Macshane's favourite expression.

"If we *arr* men of honour, we are bound to stick to our word; and hark ye, you dirty one-eyed scoundrel, if you don't immadiately make way for these leedies, and this lily-livered young jontleman who's crying so, the Meejor here and I will lug out and force you." And so saying, he drew his great sword and made a pass at Mr. Sicklop; which that gentleman avoided, and which caused him and his companion to retreat from the door. The landlady still kept her position at it, and with a storm of oaths against the Ensign, and against two Englishmen who ran away from a wild Hirishman, swore she would not budge a foot, and would stand there until her dying day.

"Faith, then, needs must," said the Ensign, and made a lunge at the hostess, which passed so near the wretch's throat, that she screamed, sank on her knees, and at last opened the door.

Down the stairs, then, with great state, Mr. Macshane led the elder lady, the married couple following; and having seen them to the street, took an affectionate farewell of the party, whom he vowed that he would come and see. "You can walk the eighteen miles aisy, between this and nightfall," said he.

"*Walk!*" exclaimed Mr. Hayes. "Why, haven't we got Ball, and shall ride and tie all the way?"

"Madam!" cried Macshane, in a stern voice, "honour before everything. Did you not, in the presence of his worship, vow and declare that you gave me that horse, and now d'ye talk of taking it

back again? Let me tell you, madam, that such paltry thricks ill become a person of your years and respectability, and ought never to be played with Insign Timothy Macshane."

He waved his hat and strutted down the street; and Mrs. Catherine Hayes, along with her bridegroom and mother-in-law, made the best of their way homeward on foot.

CHAPTER VII.

WHICH EMBRACES A PERIOD OF SEVEN YEARS.

THE recovery of so considerable a portion of his property from the clutches of Brock was, as may be imagined, no trifling source of joy to that excellent young man, Count Gustavus Adolphus de Galgenstein; and he was often known to say, with much archness, and a proper feeling of gratitude to the Fate which had ordained things so, that the robbery was, in reality, one of the best things that could have happened to him: for, in event of Mr. Brock's *not* stealing the money, his Excellency the Count would have had to pay the whole to the Warwickshire Squire, who had won it from him at play. He was enabled, in the present instance, to plead his notorious poverty as an excuse; and the Warwickshire conqueror got off with nothing, except a very badly written autograph of the Count's, simply acknowledging the debt.

This point his Excellency conceded with the greatest candour; but (as, doubtless, the reader may have remarked in the course of his experience,) to owe is not quite the same thing as to pay; and from the day of his winning the money until the day of his death the Warwickshire Squire did never, by any chance, touch a single bob, tizzy, tester, moidore, maravedi, doubloon, tomaun, or rupee, of the sum which Monsieur de Galgenstein had lost to him.

That young nobleman was, as Mr. Brock hinted in the little

autobiographical sketch which we gave in a former chapter, incarcerated for a certain period, and for certain other debts, in the donjons of Shrewsbury; but he released himself from them by that noble and consolatory method of whitewashing which the law has provided for gentlemen in his oppressed condition; and he had not been a week in London, when he fell in with, and overcame, or put to flight, Captain Wood, *alias* Brock, and immediately seized upon the remainder of his property. After receiving this, the Count, with commendable discretion, disappeared from England altogether for a while; nor are we at all authorised to state that any of his debts to his tradesmen were discharged, any more than his debts of honour, as they are pleasantly called.

Having thus settled with his creditors, the gallant Count had interest enough with some of the great folk to procure for himself a post abroad, and was absent in Holland for some time. It was here that he became acquainted with the lovely Madam Silverkoop, the widow of a deceased gentleman of Leyden; and although the lady was not at that age at which tender passions are usually inspired—being sixty—and though she could not, like Mademoiselle Ninon de l'Enclos, then at Paris, boast of charms which defied the progress of time,—for Mrs. Silverkoop was as red as a boiled lobster, and as unwieldy as a porpoise; and although her mental attractions did by no means make up for her personal deficiencies,—for she was jealous, violent, vulgar, drunken, and stingy to a miracle: yet her charms had an immediate effect on Monsieur de Galgenstein; and hence, perhaps, the reader (the rogue! how well he knows the world!) will be led to conclude that the honest widow was *rich*.

Such, indeed, she was; and Count Gustavus, despising the difference between his twenty quarterings and her twenty thousand pounds, laid the most desperate siege to her, and finished by causing her to capitulate; as I do believe, after a reasonable degree of pressing, any woman will do to any man: such, at least, has been *my* experience in the matter.

The Count then married; and it was curious to see how he—who, as we have seen in the case of Mrs. Cat, had been as great a tiger and domestic bully as any extant—now, by degrees, fell into a quiet submission towards his enormous Countess; who ordered him up and down as a lady orders her footman, who permitted him speedily not to have a will of his own, and who did not allow him a shilling of her money, without receiving for the same an accurate account.

How was it that he, the abject slave of Madam Silverkoop, had been

victorious over Mrs. Cat? The first blow is, I believe, the decisive one in these cases, and the Countess had stricken it a week after their marriage;—establishing a supremacy which the Count never afterwards attempted to question.

We have alluded to his Excellency's marriage, as in duty bound, because it will be necessary to account for his appearance hereafter in a more splendid fashion than that under which he has hitherto been known to us; and just comforting the reader by the knowledge that the union, though prosperous in a worldly point of view, was, in reality, extremely unhappy, we must say no more from this time forth of the fat and legitimate Madame de Galgenstein. Our darling is Mrs. Catherine, who had formerly acted in her stead; and only in so much as the fat Countess did influence in any way the destinies of our heroine, or those wise and virtuous persons who have appeared and are to follow her to her end, shall we in any degree allow her name to figure here. It is an awful thing to get a glimpse, as one sometimes does, when the time is past, of some little, little wheel which works the whole mighty machinery of FATE, and see how our destinies turn on a minute's delay or advance, or on the turning of a street, or on somebody else's turning of a street, or on somebody else's doing of something else in Downing Street or in Timbuctoo, now or a thousand years ago. Thus, for instance, if Miss Poots, in the year 1695, had never been the lovely inmate of a Spielhaus at Amsterdam, Mr. Van Silverkoop would never have seen her; if the day had not been extraordinarily hot, the worthy merchant would never have gone thither; if he had not been fond of Rhenish wine and sugar, he never would have called for any such delicacies; if he had not called for them, Miss Ottilia Poots would never have brought them, and partaken of them; if he had not been rich, she would certainly have rejected all the advances made to her by Silverkoop; if he had not been so fond of Rhenish and sugar, he never would have died; and Mrs. Silverkoop would have been neither rich nor a widow, nor a wife to Count von Galgenstein. Nay, nor would this history have ever been written; for if Count Galgenstein had not married the rich widow, Mrs. Catherine would never have———

Oh, my dear Madam! you thought we were going to tell you. Pooh! nonsense,—no such thing! not for two or three and seventy pages or so—when, perhaps, you *may* know what Mrs. Catherine never would have done.

The reader will remember, in the second chapter of these Memoirs, the announcement that Mrs. Catherine had given to the world a child,

who might bear, if he chose, the arms of Galgenstein, with the further adornment of a bar-sinister. This child had been put out to nurse some time before its mother's elopement from the Count; and as that nobleman was in funds at the time (having had that success at play which we duly chronicled), he paid a sum of no less than twenty guineas, which was to be the yearly reward of the nurse into whose charge the boy was put. The woman grew fond of the brat; and when, after the first year, she had no further news or remittances from father or mother, she determined, for a while at least, to maintain the infant at her own expense: for, when rebuked by her neighbours on this score, she stoutly swore that no parents could ever desert their children, and that some day or other she should not fail to be rewarded for her trouble with this one.

Under this strange mental hallucination poor Goody Billings, who had five children and a husband of her own, continued to give food and shelter to little Tom for a period of no less than seven years; and though it must be acknowledged that the young gentleman did not in the slightest degree merit the kindnesses shown to him, Goody Billings, who was of a very soft and pitiful disposition, continued to bestow them upon him: because, she said, he was lonely and unprotected, and deserved them more than other children who had fathers and mothers to look after them. If, then, any difference was made between Tom's treatment and that of her own brood, it was considerably in favour of the former; to whom the largest proportions of treacle were allotted for his bread, and the handsomest supplies of hasty pudding. Besides, to do Mrs. Billings justice, there *was* a party against him; and that consisted not only of her husband and her five children, but of every single person in the neighbourhood who had an opportunity of seeing and becoming acquainted with Master Tom.

A celebrated philosopher—I think Miss Edgeworth—has broached the consolatory doctrine, that in intellect and disposition all human beings are entirely equal, and that circumstance and education are the causes of the distinctions and divisions which afterwards unhappily take place among them. Not to argue this question, which places Jack Howard and Jack Thurtell on an exact level,—which would have us to believe that Lord Melbourne is by natural gifts and excellences a man as honest, brave, and far-sighted as the Duke of Wellington,—which would make out that Lord Lyndhurst is, in point of principle, eloquence, and political honesty, no better than Mr. O'Connell,—not, I say, arguing this doctrine, let us simply state that Master Thomas

Billings (for, having no other, he took the name of the worthy people who adopted him,) was in his long-coats fearfully passionate, screaming and roaring perpetually, and showing all the ill that he *could* show. At the age of two, when his strength enabled him to toddle abroad, his favourite resort was the coal-hole or the dungheap: his roarings had not diminished in the least, and he had added to his former virtues two new ones,—a love of fighting and stealing; both which amiable qualities he had many opportunities of exercising every day. He fought his little adoptive brothers and sisters; he kicked and cuffed his father and mother; he fought the cat, stamped upon the kittens, was worsted in a severe battle with the hen in the back-yard; but, in revenge, nearly beat a little sucking-pig to death, whom he caught alone, and rambling near his favourite haunt, the dunghill. As for stealing, he stole the eggs, which he perforated and emptied; the butter, which he ate with or without bread, as he could find it; the sugar, which he cunningly secreted in the leaves of a Baker's *Chronicle*, that nobody in the establishment could read; and thus from the pages of history he used to suck in all he knew—thieving and lying namely; in which, for his years, he made wonderful progress. If any followers of Miss Edgeworth and the philosophers are inclined to disbelieve this statement, or to set it down as overcharged and distorted, let them be assured that just this very picture was, of all pictures in the world, taken from nature. I, Ikey Solomons, once had a dear little brother who could steal before he could walk (and this not from encouragement,—for, if you know the world, you must know that in families of our profession the point of honour is sacred at home,—but from pure nature)—who could steal, I say, before he could walk, and lie before he could speak; and who, at four and a half years of age, having attacked my sister Rebecca on some question of lollipops, had smitten her on the elbow with a fire-shovel, apologizing to us by saying simply, "—— her, I wish it had been her head!" Dear, dear Aminadab! I think of you, and laugh these philosophers to scorn. Nature made you for that career which you fulfilled: you were from your birth to your dying a scoundrel; you *couldn't* have been anything else, however your lot was cast; and blessed it was that you were born among the prigs,—for had you been of any other profession, alas! alas! what ills might you have done? As I have heard the author of "Richelieu," "Siamese Twins," &c. say, "Poëta nascitur non fit," which means that though he had tried ever so much to be a poet, it was all moonshine: in the like manner, I say, "*Roagus* nascitur non fit." We have it from nature, and so a fig for Miss Edgeworth.

In this manner, then, while his father, blessed with a wealthy wife, was leading, in a fine house, the life of a galley-slave; while his mother, married to Mr. Hayes, and made an honest woman of, as the saying is, was passing her time respectably in Warwickshire, Mr. Thomas Billings was inhabiting the same county, not cared for by either of them; but ordained by Fate to join them one day, and have a mighty influence upon the fortunes of both. For, as it has often happened to the traveller in the York or the Exeter coach to fall snugly asleep in his corner, and on awaking suddenly to find himself sixty or seventy miles from the place where Somnus first visited him: as, we say, although you sit still, Time, poor wretch, keeps perpetually running on, and so must run day and night, with never a pause or a halt of five minutes to get a drink, until his dying day; let the reader imagine that since he left Mrs. Hayes and all the other worthy personages of this history, in the last chapter, seven years have sped away; during which, all our heroes and heroines have been accomplishing their destinies.

Seven years of country carpentering, or other trading, on the part of a husband, of ceaseless scolding, violence, and discontent on the part of a wife, are not pleasant to describe: so we shall omit altogether any account of the early married life of Mr. and Mrs. John Hayes. The "Newgate Calendar" (to which excellent compilation we and the *other* popular novelists of the day can never be sufficiently grateful) states that Hayes left his house three or four times during this period, and, urged by the restless humours of his wife, tried several professions: returning, however, as he grew weary of each, to his wife and his paternal home. After a certain time his parents died, and by their demise he succeeded to a small property, and the carpentering business, which he for some time followed.

What, then, in the meanwhile, had become of Captain Wood, or Brock, and Ensign Macshane?—the only persons now to be accounted for in our catalogue. For about six months after their capture and release of Mr. Hayes, those noble gentlemen had followed, with much prudence and success, that trade which the celebrated and polite Duval, the ingenious Sheppard, the dauntless Turpin, and indeed many other heroes of our most popular novels, had pursued, or were pursuing, in their time. And so considerable were said to be Captain Wood's gains, that reports were abroad of his having somewhere a buried treasure; to which he might have added more, had not Fate suddenly cut short his career as a prig. He and the Ensign were—shame to say—transported for stealing three pewter-pots off a railing

at Exeter; and not being known in the town, which they had only reached that morning, they were detained by no further charges, but simply condemned on this one. For this misdemeanor, her Majesty's Government vindictively sent them for seven years beyond the sea; and, as the fashion then was, sold the use of their bodies to Virginian planters during that space of time. It is thus, alas! that the strong are always used to deal with the weak, and many an honest fellow has been led to rue his unfortunate difference with the law.

Thus, then, we have settled all scores. The Count is in Holland with his wife; Mrs. Cat in Warwickshire along with her excellent husband; Master Thomas Billings with his adoptive parents in the same county; and the two military gentlemen watching the progress and cultivation of the tobacco and cotton plant in the New World. All these things having passed between the acts, dingaring-a-dingaring-a-dingledingle-ding, the drop draws up, and the next act begins. By the way, the play *ends* with a drop: but that is neither here nor there.

* * * * *

[Here, as in a theatre, the orchestra is supposed to play something melodious. The people get up, shake themselves, yawn, and settle down in their seats again. "'Porter, ale, ginger-beer, cider," comes round, squeezing through the legs of the gentlemen in the pit. Nobody takes anything as usual; and lo! the curtain rises again. "'Sh, 'shsh, 'shshshhh! Hats off!" says everybody.]

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Mrs. Hayes had now been for six years the adored wife of Mr. Hayes, and no offspring had arisen to bless their loves and perpetuate their name. She had obtained a complete mastery over her lord and master; and having had, as far as was in that gentleman's power, every single wish gratified that she could demand, in the way of dress, treats to Coventry and Birmingham, drink, and what not—for, though a hard man, John Hayes had learned to spend his money pretty freely on himself and her—having had all her wishes gratified, it was natural that she should begin to find out some more; and the next whim she hit upon was to be restored to her child. It may be as well to state that she had never informed her husband of the existence of that phenomenon, although he was aware of his wife's former connexion with the Count,—Mrs. Hayes, in their matrimonial quarrels, invariably taunting him with accounts of her former splendour and happiness, and with his own meanness of taste in condescending to take up with his Excellency's leavings.

She determined, then (but as yet had not confided her determination to her husband), she would have her boy; although in her seven years' residence within twenty miles of him she had never once thought of seeing him: and the kind reader knows that when his excellent lady determines on a thing—a shawl, or an opera-box, or a new carriage, or twenty-four singing-lessons from Tamburini, or a night at the "Eagle Tavern," City Road, or a ride in a bus to Richmond and tea and brandy-and-water at "Rose Cottage Hotel"—the reader, high or low, knows that when Mrs. Reader desires a thing, have it she will; you may just as well talk of avoiding her as of avoiding gout, bills, or grey hairs—and that you know is impossible. I, for my part, have had all three—ay, and a wife too.

I say that when a woman is resolved on a thing, happen it will: if husbands refuse, Fate will interfere (*flectere si nequeo*, &c.; but quotations are odious). And some hidden power was working in the case of Mrs. Hayes, and, for its own awful purposes, lending her its aid.

Who has not felt how he works—the dreadful, conquering Spirit of Ill? Who cannot see, in the circle of his own society, the fated and foredoomed to woe and evil? Some call the doctrine of destiny a dark creed; but, for me, I would fain try and think it a consolatory one. It is better, with all one's sins upon one's head, to deem oneself in the hands of Fate than to think—with our fierce passions and weak repentances; with our resolves so loud, so vain, so ludicrously, despicably weak and frail; with our dim, wavering, wretched conceits about virtue, and our irresistible propensity to wrong,—that we are the workers of our future sorrow or happiness. If we depend on our strength, what is it against mighty circumstance? If we look to ourselves, what hope have we? Look back at the whole of your life, and see how Fate has mastered you and it. Think of your disappointments and your successes. Has *your* striving influenced one or the other? A fit of indigestion puts itself between you and honours and reputation; an apple plops on your nose, and makes you a world's wonder and glory; a fit of poverty makes a rascal of you, who were, and are still, an honest man; clubs, trumps, or six lucky mains at dice, make an honest man for life of you, who ever were, will be, and are a rascal. Who sends the illness? who causes the apple to fall? who deprives you of your worldly goods? or who shuffles the cards, and brings trumps, honour, virtue, and prosperity back again? You call it chance; ay, and so it is chance that when the floor gives way, and the rope stretches tight, the poor wretch before St. Sepulchre's

clock dies. Only with us, clear-sighted mortals as we are, we can't *see* the rope by which we hang, and know not when or how the drop may fall.

But *revenons à nos moutons:* let us return to that sweet lamb, Master Thomas, and the milk-white ewe, Mrs. Cat. Seven years had passed away, and she began to think that she should very much like to see her child once more. It was written that she should; and you shall hear how, soon after, without any great exertions of hers, back he came to her.

In the month of July, in the year 1715, there came down a road about ten miles from the city of Worcester, two gentlemen; not mounted, Templar-like, upon one horse, but having a horse between them—a sorry bay, with a sorry saddle, and a large pack behind it; on which each by turn took a ride. Of the two, one was a man of excessive stature, with red hair, a very prominent nose, and a faded military dress; while the other, an old weather-beaten, sober-looking personage, wore the costume of a civilian—both man and dress appearing to have reached the autumnal, or seedy state. However, the pair seemed, in spite of their apparent poverty, to be passably merry. The old gentleman rode the horse; and had, in the course of their journey, ridden him two miles at least in every three. The tall one walked with immense strides by his side; and seemed, indeed, as if he could have quickly outstripped the four-footed animal, had he chosen to exert his speed, or had not affection for his comrade retained him at his stirrup.

A short time previously the horse had cast a shoe; and this the tall man on foot had gathered up, and was holding in his hand: it having been voted that the first blacksmith to whose shop they should come should be called upon to fit it again upon the bay horse.

"Do you remimber this counthry, Meejor?" said the tall man, who was looking about him very much pleased, and sucking a flower. "I think thim green cornfields is prettier looking at than the d—— tobacky out yondther, and bad luck to it!"

"I recollect the place right well, and some queer pranks we played here seven years agone," responded the gentleman addressed as Major. "You remember that man and his wife, whom we took in pawn at the 'Three Rooks?'"

"And the landlady only hung last Michaelmas?" said the tall man, parenthetically.

"Hang the landlady!—we've got all we ever would out of *her*, you know. But about the man and woman. You went after the

chap's mother, and, like a jackass, as you are, let him loose. Well, the woman was that Catherine that you've often heard me talk about. I like the wench, —— her, for I almost brought her up; and she was for a year or two along with that scoundrel Galgenstein, who has been the cause of my ruin."

"The infernal blackguard and ruffian!" said the tall man; who, with his companion, has no doubt been recognized by the reader.

"Well, this Catherine had a child by Galgenstein; and somewhere here hard by the woman lived to whom we carried the brat to nurse. She was the wife of a blacksmith, one Billings: it won't be out of the way to get our horse shod at his house, if he is alive still, and we may learn something about the little beast. I should be glad to see the mother well enough."

"Do I remimber her?" said the Ensign. "Do I remimber whisky? Sure I do, and the snivelling sneak her husband, and the stout old lady her mother-in-law, and the dirty one-eyed ruffian who sold me the parson's hat, that had so nearly brought me into trouble. Oh but it was a rare rise we got out of them chaps, and the old landlady that's hanged too!" And here both Ensign Macshane and Major Brock, or Wood, grinned, and showed much satisfaction.

It will be necessary to explain the reason of it. We gave the British public to understand that the landlady of the "Three Rooks," at Worcester, was a notorious fence, or banker of thieves; that is, a purchaser of their merchandise. In her hands Mr. Brock and his companion had left property to the amount of sixty or seventy pounds, which was secreted in a cunning recess in a chamber of the "Three Rooks," known only to the landlady and the gentlemen who banked with her; and in this place, Mr. Sicklop, the one-eyed man who had joined in the Hayes adventure, his comrade, and one or two of the topping prigs of the county, were free. Mr. Sicklop had been shot dead in a night attack near Bath; the landlady had been suddenly hanged, as an accomplice in another case of robbery; and when, on their return from Virginia, our two heroes, whose hopes of livelihood depended upon it, had bent their steps towards Worcester, they were not a little frightened to hear of the cruel fate of the hostess and many of the amiable frequenters of the "Three Rooks." All the goodly company were separated; the house was no longer an inn. Was the money gone too? At least it was worth while to look—which Messrs. Brock and Macshane determined to do.

The house being now a private one, Mr. Brock, with a genius that was above his station, visited its owner, with a huge portfolio under

his arm, and, in the character of a painter, requested permission to take a particular sketch from a particular window. The Ensign followed with the artist's materials (consisting simply of a screw-driver and a crow-bar); and it is hardly necessary to say that, when admission was granted to them, they opened the well-known door, and to their inexpressible satisfaction discovered, not their own peculiar savings exactly, for these had been appropriated instantly on hearing of their transportation, but stores of money and goods to the amount of near three hundred pounds: to which Mr. Macshane said they had as just and honourable a right as anybody else. And so they had as just a right as anybody—except the original owners; but who was to discover them?

With this booty they set out on their journey—anywhere, for they knew not whither; and it so chanced that when their horse's shoe came off, they were within a few furlongs of the cottage of Mr. Billings, the blacksmith. As they came near, they were saluted by tremendous roars issuing from the smithy. A small boy was held across the bellows, two or three children of smaller and larger growth were holding him down, and many others of the village were gazing in at the window, while a man, half-naked, was lashing the little boy with a whip, and occasioning the cries heard by the travellers. As the horse drew up, the operator looked at the new-comers for a moment, and then proceeded incontinently with his work; belabouring the child more fiercely than ever.

When he had done, he turned round to the new-comers and asked how he could serve them? whereupon Mr. Wood (for such was the name he adopted, and by such we shall call him to the end) wittily remarked that however he might wish to serve *them*, he seemed mightily inclined to serve that young gentleman first.

"It's no joking matter," said the blacksmith: "if I don't serve him so now, he'll be worse off in his old age. He'll come to the gallows, as sure as his name is Bill—never mind what his name is." And so saying, he gave the urchin another cut; which elicited, of course, another scream.

"Oh! his name is Bill?" said Captain Wood.

"His name's *not* Bill!" said the blacksmith, sulkily. "He's no name; and no heart, neither. My wife took the brat in, seven years ago, from a beggarly French chap to nurse, and she kept him, for she was a good soul" (here his eyes began to wink), "and she's—she's gone now" (here he began fairly to blubber). "And d—— him, out of love for her, I kept him too, and the scoundrel is a liar and a thief.

This blessed day, merely to vex me and my boys here, he spoke ill of her he did, and I'll—cut—his———life—out—I—will !" and with each word honest Mulciber applied a whack on the body of little Tom Billings; who, by shrill shrieks, and oaths in treble, acknowledged the receipt of the blows.

"Come, come," said Mr. Wood, "set the boy down, and the bellows a-going; my horse wants shoeing, and the poor lad has had strapping enough."

The blacksmith obeyed, and cast poor Master Thomas loose. As he staggered away and looked back at his tormentor, his countenance assumed an expression which made Mr. Wood say, grasping hold of Macshane's arm, "It's the boy, it's the boy! when his mother gave Galgenstein the laudanum, she had the self-same look with her !"

"Had she really now?" said Mr. Macshane. "And pree, Meejor, who *was* his mother?"

"Mrs. Cat, you fool !" answered Wood.

"Then, upon my secred word of honour, she has a mighty fine *kitten* anyhow, my dear. Aha !"

"They don't *drown* such kittens," said Mr. Wood, archly; and Macshane, taking the allusion, clapped his finger to his nose in token of perfect approbation of his commander's sentiment.

While the blacksmith was shoeing the horse, Mr. Wood asked him many questions concerning the lad whom he had just been chastising, and succeeded, beyond a doubt, in establishing his identity with the child whom Catherine Hall had brought into the world seven years since. Billings told him of all the virtues of his wife, and the manifold crimes of the lad: how he stole, and fought, and lied, and swore; and though the youngest under his roof, exercised the most baneful influence over all the rest of his family. He was determined at last, he said, to put him to the parish, for he did not dare to keep him.

"He's a fine whelp, and would fetch ten pieces in Virginny," sighed the Ensign.

"Crimp, of Bristol, would give five for him," said Mr. Wood, ruminating.

"Why not take him?" said the Ensign.

"Faith, why not?" said Mr. Wood. "His keep, meanwhile, will not be sixpence a day." Then turning round to the blacksmith, "Mr. Billings," said he, "you will be surprised, perhaps, to hear that I know everything regarding that poor lad's history. His mother was an unfortunate lady of high family, now no more; his father a German nobleman, Count de Galgenstein by name."

"The very man!" said Billings: "a young, fair-haired man, who came here with the child, and a dragoon sergeant."

"Count de Galgenstein by name, who, on the point of death, recommended the infant to me."

"And did he pay you seven years' boarding?" said Mr. Billings, who was quite alive at the very idea.

"Alas, sir, not a jot! he died, sir, six hundred pounds in my debt; didn't he, Ensign?"

"Six hundred, upon my secred honour! I remember when he got into the house along with the poli——"

"Psha! what matters it?" here broke out Mr. Wood, looking fiercely at the Ensign. "Six hundred pounds he owes me: how was he to pay you? But he told me to take charge of this boy, if I found him; and found him I have, and *will* take charge of him, if you will hand him over."

"Send our Tom!" cried Billings. And when that youth appeared, scowling, and yet trembling, and prepared, as it seemed, for another castigation, his father, to his surprise, asked him if he was willing to go along with those gentlemen, or whether he would be a good lad and stay with him.

Mr. Tom replied immediately, "I won't be a good lad, and I'd rather go to —— than stay with you!"

"Will you leave your brothers and sisters?" said Billings, looking very dismal.

"Hang my brothers and sisters—I hate 'em; and, besides, I haven't got any!"

"But you had a good mother, hadn't you, Tom?"

Tom paused for a moment.

"Mother's gone," said he, "and you flog me, and I'll go with these men."

"Well, then, go thy ways," said Billings, starting up in a passion: "go thy ways for a graceless reprobate; and if this gentleman will take you, he may do so."

After some further parley, the conversation ended, and the next morning Mr. Wood's party consisted of three: a little boy being mounted upon the bay horse, in addition to the Ensign or himself; and the whole company went journeying towards Bristol.

* * * * *

We have said that Mrs. Hayes had, on a sudden, taken a fit of maternal affection, and was bent upon being restored to her child;

and that benign destiny which watched over the life of this lucky lady instantly set about gratifying her wish, and, without cost to herself of coach-hire or saddle-horse, sent the young gentleman very quickly to her arms. The village in which the Hayeses dwelt was but a very few miles out of the road from Bristol; whither, on the benevolent mission above hinted at, our party of worthies were bound: and coming, towards the afternoon, in sight of the house of that very Justice Ballance who had been so nearly the ruin of Ensign Macshane, that officer narrated, for the hundredth time, and with much glee, the circumstances which had then befallen him, and the manner in which Mrs. Hayes, the elder, had come forward to his rescue.

"Suppose we go and see the old girl?" suggested Mr. Wood. "No harm can come to us now." And his comrade always assenting, they wound their way towards the village, and reached it as the evening came on. In the public-house where they rested, Wood made inquiries concerning the Hayes family; was informed of the death of the old couple, of the establishment of John Hayes and his wife in their place, and of the kind of life that these latter led together. When all these points had been imparted to him, he ruminated much: an expression of sublime triumph and exultation at length lighted up his features. "I think, Tim," said he at last, "that we can make more than five pieces of that boy."

"Oh, in coorse!" said Timothy Macshane, Esq.; who always agreed with his "Meejor."

"In coorse, you fool! and how? I'll tell you how. This Hayes is well to do in the world, and——"

"And we'll nab him again—ha, ha!" roared out Macshane. "By my secred honour, Meejor, there never was a gineral like you at a strathyjam!"

"Peace, you bellowing donkey, and don't wake the child. The man is well to do, his wife rules him, and they have no children. Now, either she will be very glad to have the boy back again, and pay for the finding of him, or else she has said nothing about him, and will pay us for being silent too: or, at any rate, Hayes himself will be ashamed at finding his wife the mother of a child a year older than his marriage, and will pay for the keeping of the brat away. There's profit, my dear, in any one of the cases, or my name's not Peter Brock."

When the Ensign understood this wondrous argument, he would fain have fallen on his knees and worshipped his friend and guide. They began operations, almost immediately, by an attack on Mrs.

Hayes. On hearing, as she did in private interview with the ex-corporal the next morning, that her son was found, she was agitated by both of the passions which Wood attributed to her. She longed to have the boy back, and would give any reasonable sum to see him; but she dreaded exposure, and would pay equally to avoid that. How could she gain the one point and escape the other?

Mrs. Hayes hit upon an expedient which, I am given to understand, is not uncommon now-a-days. She suddenly discovered that she had a dear brother, who had been obliged to fly the country in consequence of having joined the Pretender, and had died in France, leaving behind him an only son. This boy her brother had, with his last breath, recommended to her protection, and had confided him to the charge of a brother officer who was now in the country, and would speedily make his appearance; and, to put the story beyond a doubt, Mr. Wood wrote the letter from her brother stating all these particulars, and Ensign Macshane received full instructions how to perform the part of the "brother officer." What consideration Mr. Wood received for his services, we cannot say; only it is well known that Mr. Hayes caused to be committed to gaol a young apprentice in his service, charged with having broken open a cupboard in which Mr. Hayes had forty guineas in gold and silver, and to which none but he and his wife had access.

Having made these arrangements, the Corporal and his little party decamped to a short distance, and Mrs. Catherine was left to prepare her husband for a speedy addition to his family, in the shape of this darling nephew. John Hayes received the news with anything but pleasure. He had never heard of any brother of Catherine's; she had been bred at the workhouse, and nobody ever hinted that she had relatives: but it is easy for a lady of moderate genius to invent circumstances; and with lies, tears, threats, coaxings, oaths, and other blandishments, she compelled him to submit.

Two days afterwards, as Mr. Hayes was working in his shop with his lady seated beside him, the trampling of a horse was heard in his court-yard, and a gentleman, of huge stature, descended from it, and strode into the shop. His figure was wrapped in a large cloak; but Mr. Hayes could not help fancying that he had somewhere seen his face before.

"This, I preshoom," said the gentleman, "is Misther Hayes, that I have come so many miles to see, and this is his amiable lady? I was the most intimate frind, madam, of your laminted brother, who died in King Lewis's service, and whose last touching letthers I

despatched to you two days ago. I have with me a further precious token of my dear friend, Captain Hall—it is *here*."

And so saying, the military gentleman, with one arm, removed his

cloak, and stretching forward the other into Hayes's face almost, stretched likewise forward a little boy, grinning and sprawling in the air, and prevented only from falling to the ground by the hold which the Ensign kept of the waistband of his little coat and breeches.

"Isn't he a pretty boy?" said Mrs. Hayes, sidling up to her husband tenderly, and pressing one of Mr. Hayes's hands.

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About the lad's beauty it is needless to say what the carpenter thought; but that night, and for many, many nights after, the lad stayed at Mr. Hayes's.

CHAPTER VIII.

ENUMERATES THE ACCOMPLISHMENTS OF MASTER THOMAS BILLINGS —INTRODUCES BROCK AS DOCTOR WOOD—AND ANNOUNCES THE EXECUTION OF ENSIGN MACSHANE.

WE are obliged, in recording this history, to follow accurately that great authority, the "Calendarium Newgaticum Roagorumque Registerium," of which every lover of literature in the present day knows the value; and as that remarkable work totally discards all the unities in its narratives, and reckons the life of its heroes only by their actions, and not by periods of time, we must follow in the wake of this mighty ark—a humble cock-boat. When it pauses, we pause; when it runs ten knots an hour, we run with the same celerity; and as, in order to carry the reader from the penultimate chapter of this work unto the last chapter, we were compelled to make him leap over a gap of seven blank years, ten years more must likewise be granted to us before we are at liberty to resume our history.

During that period, Master Thomas Billings had been under the especial care of his mother; and, as may be imagined, he rather increased than diminished the accomplishments for which he had been remarkable while under the roof of his foster-father. And with this advantage, that while at the blacksmith's, and only three or four years of age, his virtues were necessarily appreciated only in his family circle, and among those few acquaintances of his own time of life whom a youth of three can be expected to meet in the alleys or over

the gutters of a small country hamlet,—in his mother's residence, his circle extended with his own growth, and he began to give proofs of those powers of which in infancy there had been only encouraging indications. Thus it was nowise remarkable that a child of four years should not know his letters, and should have had a great disinclination to learn them; but when a young man of fifteen showed the same creditable ignorance, the same undeviating dislike, it was easy to see that he possessed much resolution and perseverance. When it was remarked, too, that, in case of any difference, he not only beat the usher, but by no means disdained to torment and bully the very smallest boys of the school, it was easy to see that his mind was comprehensive and careful, as well as courageous and grasping. As it was said of the Duke of Wellington, in the Peninsula, that he had a thought for everybody—from Lord Hill to the smallest drummer in the army—in like manner Tom Billings bestowed *his* attention on high and low; but in the shape of blows: he would fight the strongest and kick the smallest, and was always at work with one or the other. At thirteen, when he was removed from the establishment whither he had been sent, he was the cock of the school out of doors, and the very last boy in. He used to let the little boys and new-comers pass him by, and laugh; but he always belaboured them unmercifully afterwards; and then it was, he said, *his* turn to laugh. With such a pugnacious turn, Tom Billings ought to have been made a soldier and might have died a marshal; but, by an unlucky ordinance of fate, he was made a tailor, and died a —— never mind what for the present; suffice it to say, that he was suddenly cut off at a very early period of his existence, by a disease which has exercised considerable ravages among the British youth.

By consulting the authority above mentioned, we find that Hayes did not confine himself to the profession of a carpenter, or remain long established in the country; but was induced, by the eager spirit of Mrs. Catherine most probably, to try his fortune in the metropolis; where he lived, flourished, and died. Oxford Road, Saint Giles's, and Tottenham Court, were, at various periods of his residence in town, inhabited by him. At one place, he carried on the business of greengrocer and small-coalman; in another, he was carpenter, undertaker, and lender of money to the poor: finally, he was a lodging-house keeper in the Oxford or Tyburn Road; but continued to exercise the last-named charitable profession.

Lending as he did upon pledges, and carrying on a pretty large trade, it was not for him, of course, to inquire into the pedigree of all

the pieces of plate, the bales of cloth, swords, watches, wigs, shoe-buckles, &c., that were confided by his friends to his keeping; but it is clear that his friends had the requisite confidence in him, and that he enjoyed the esteem of a class of characters who still live in history, and are admired unto this very day. The mind loves to think that, perhaps, in Mr. Hayes's back-parlour the gallant Turpin might have hob-and-nobbed with Mrs. Catherine; that here, perhaps, the noble Sheppard might have cracked his joke, or quaffed his pint of rum. Who knows but that Macheath and Paul Clifford may have crossed legs under Hayes's dinner-table? But why pause to speculate on things that might have been? why desert reality for fond imagination, or call up from their honoured graves the sacred dead? I know not: and yet, in sooth, I can never pass Cumberland Gate without a sigh, as I think of the gallant cavaliers who traversed that road in old time. Pious priests accompanied their triumphs; their chariots were surrounded by hosts of glittering javelin-men. As the slave at the car of the Roman conqueror shouted, "Remember thou art mortal!" before the eyes of the British warrior rode the undertaker and his coffin, telling him that he too must die! Mark well the spot! A hundred years ago Albion Street (where comic Power dwelt, Milesia's darling son)—Albion Street was a desert. The square of Connaught was without its penultimate, and, strictly speaking, *naught*. The Edgware Road was then a road, 'tis true; with tinkling waggons passing now and then, and fragrant walls of snowy hawthorn blossoms. The ploughman whistled over Nutford Place; down the green solitudes of Sovereign Street the merry milkmaid led the lowing kine. Here, then, in the midst of green fields and sweet air—before ever omnibuses were, and when Pineapple Turnpike and Terrace were alike unknown—here stood Tyburn: and on the road towards it, perhaps to enjoy the prospect, stood, in the year 1725, the habitation of Mr. John Hayes.

One fine morning in the year 1725, Mrs. Hayes, who had been abroad in her best hat and riding-hood; Mr. Hayes, who for a wonder had accompanied her; and Mrs. Springatt, a lodger, who for a remuneration had the honour of sharing Mrs. Hayes's friendship and table: all returned, smiling and rosy, at about half-past ten o'clock, from a walk which they had taken to Bayswater. Many thousands of people were likewise seen flocking down the Oxford Road; and you would rather have thought, from the smartness of their appearance and the pleasure depicted in their countenances, that they were just issuing from a sermon, than quitting the ceremony which they had been to attend.

The fact is, that they had just been to see a gentleman hanged,—

a cheap pleasure, which the Hayes family never denied themselves; and they returned home with a good appetite to breakfast, braced by the walk, and tickled into hunger as it were by the spectacle. I can recollect, when I was a gyp at Cambridge, that the "men" used to have breakfast-parties for the very same purpose; and the exhibition of the morning acted infallibly upon the stomach, and caused the young students to eat with much voracity.

Well, Mrs. Catherine, a handsome, well-dressed, plump, rosy woman, of three or four and thirty (and when, my dear, is a woman handsomer than at that age?) came in quite merrily from her walk, and entered the back-parlour, which looked into a pleasant yard, or garden, whereon the sun was shining very gaily; and where, at a table covered with a nice white cloth, laid out with some silver mugs, too, and knives, all with different crests and patterns, sat an old gentleman reading in an old book.

"Here we are at last, Doctor," said Mrs. Hayes, "and here's his speech." She produced the little halfpenny tract, which to this day is sold at the gallows-foot upon the death of every offender. "I've seen a many men turned off, to be sure; but I never did see one who bore it more like a man than he did."

"My dear," said the gentleman addressed as Doctor, "he was as cool and as brave as steel, and no more minded hanging than tooth-drawing."

"It was the drink that ruined him," said Mrs. Cat.

"Drink, and bad company. I warned him, my dear,—I warned him years ago: and directly he got into Wild's gang, I knew that he had not a year to run. Ah, why, my love, will men continue such dangerous courses," continued the Doctor, with a sigh, "and jeopardy their lives for a miserable watch or a snuff-box, of which Mr. Wild takes three-fourths of the produce? But here comes the breakfast; and, egad, I am as hungry as a lad of twenty."

Indeed, at this moment Mrs. Hayes's servant appeared with a smoking dish of bacon and greens; and Mr. Hayes himself ascended from the cellar (of which he kept the key), bearing with him a tolerably large jug of small-beer. To this repast the Doctor, Mrs. Springatt (the other lodger), and Mr. and Mrs. Hayes, proceeded with great alacrity. A fifth cover was laid, but not used; the company remarking that "Tom had very likely found some acquaintances at Tyburn, with whom he might choose to pass the morning."

Tom was Master Thomas Billings, now of the age of sixteen: slim, smart, five feet ten inches in height, handsome, sallow in complexion,

black-eyed, and black-haired. Mr. Billings was apprentice to a tailor, of tolerable practice, who was to take him into partnership at the end of his term. It was supposed, and with reason, that Tom would not fail to make a fortune in this business; of which the present head was one Beinkleider, a German. Beinkleider was skilful in his trade (after the manner of his nation, which in breeches and metaphysics—in inexpressibles and incomprehensibles—may instruct all Europe), but too fond of his pleasure. Some promissory-notes of his had found their way into Hayes's hands, and had given him the means not only of providing Master Billings with a cheap apprenticeship, and a cheap partnership afterwards; but would empower him, in one or two years after the young partner had joined the firm, to eject the old one altogether. So that there was every prospect that, when Mr. Billings was twenty-one years of age, poor Beinkleider would have to act, not as his master, but his journeyman.

Tom was a very precocious youth; was supplied by a doting mother with plenty of pocket-money, and spent it with a number of lively companions of both sexes, at plays, bull-baitings, fairs, jolly parties on the river, and such like innocent amusements. He could throw a main, too, as well as his elders; had pinked his man, in a row at Madam King's in the Piazza; and was much respected at the Roundhouse.

Mr. Hayes was not very fond of this promising young gentleman; indeed, he had the baseness to bear malice, because, in a quarrel which occurred about two years previously, he, Hayes, being desirous to chastise Mr. Billings, had found himself not only quite incompetent, but actually at the mercy of the boy; who struck him over the head with a joint-stool, felled him to the ground, and swore he would have his life. The Doctor, who was then also a lodger at Mr. Hayes's, interposed, and restored the combatants, not to friendship, but to peace. Hayes never afterwards attempted to lift his hand to the young man, but contented himself with hating him profoundly. In this sentiment Mr. Billings participated cordially; and, quite unlike Mr. Hayes, who never dared to show his dislike, used on every occasion when they met, by actions, looks, words, sneers, and curses, to let his step-father know the opinion which he had of him. Why did not Hayes discard the boy altogether? Because, if he did so, he was really afraid of his life, and because he trembled before Mrs. Hayes, his lady, as the leaf trembles before the tempest in October. His breath was not his own, but hers; his money, too, had been chiefly of her getting,—for though he was as stingy and mean as

mortal man can be, and so likely to save much, he had not the genius for *getting* which Mrs. Hayes possessed. She kept his books (for she had learned to read and write by this time), she made his bargains, and she directed the operations of the poor-spirited little capitalist. When bills became due, and debtors pressed for time, then she brought Hayes's own professional merits into play. The man was as deaf and cold as a rock; never did poor tradesman gain a penny from him; never were the bailiffs delayed one single minute from their prey. The Beinkleider business, for instance, showed pretty well the genius of the two. Hayes was for closing with him at once; but his wife saw the vast profits which might be drawn out of him, and arranged the apprenticeship and the partnership before alluded to. The woman heartily scorned and spit upon her husband, who fawned upon her like a spaniel. She loved good cheer; she did not want for a certain kind of generosity. The only feeling that Hayes had for any one except himself was for his wife, whom he held in a cowardly awe and attachment: he liked drink, too, which made him chirping and merry, and accepted willingly any treats that his acquaintances might offer him; but he would suffer agonies when his wife brought or ordered from the cellar a bottle of wine.

And now for the Doctor. He was about seventy years of age. He had been much abroad; he was of a sober, cheerful aspect; he dressed handsomely and quietly in a broad hat and cassock; but saw no company except the few friends whom he met at the coffee-house. He had an income of about one hundred pounds, which he promised to leave to young Billings. He was amused with the lad, and fond of his mother, and had boarded with them for some years past. The Doctor, in fact, was our old friend Corporal Brock; the Rev. Doctor Wood now, as he had been Major Wood fifteen years back.

Any one who has read the former part of this history must have seen that we have spoken throughout with invariable respect of Mr. Brock; and that in every circumstance in which he has appeared, he has acted not only with prudence, but often with genius. The early obstacle to Mr. Brock's success was want of conduct simply. Drink, women, play—how many a brave fellow have they ruined!—had pulled Brock down as often as his merit had carried him up. When a man's passion for play has brought him to be a scoundrel, it at once ceases to be hurtful to him in a worldly point of view; he cheats, and wins. It is only for the idle and luxurious that women retain their fascinations to a very late period; and Brock's passions had been whipped out of him in Virginia; where much ill health, ill treatment,

hard labour, and hard food, speedily put an end to them. He forgot there even how to drink; rum or wine made this poor declining gentleman so ill that he could indulge in them no longer; and so his three vices were cured. Had he been ambitious, there is little doubt but that Mr. Brock, on his return from transportation, might have risen in the world; but he was old and a philosopher: he did not care about rising. Living was cheaper in those days, and interest for money higher: when he had amassed about six hundred pounds, he purchased an annuity of seventy-two pounds, and gave out—why should he not?—that he had the capital as well as the interest. After leaving the Hayes family in the country, he found them again in London: he took up his abode with them, and was attached to the mother and the son. Do you suppose that rascals have not affections like other people? hearts, madam—ay, hearts—and family ties which they cherish? As the Doctor lived on with this charming family, he began to regret that he had sunk all his money in annuities, and could not, as he repeatedly vowed he would, leave his savings to his adopted children.

He felt an indescribable pleasure ("*suave mari magno*," &c.) in watching the storms and tempests of the Hayes *ménage*. He used to encourage Mrs. Catherine into anger when, haply, that lady's fits of calm would last too long; he used to warm up the disputes between wife and husband, mother and son, and enjoy them beyond expression: they served him for daily amusement; and he used to laugh until the tears ran down his venerable cheeks at the accounts which young Tom continually brought him of his pranks abroad, among watchmen and constables, at taverns or elsewhere.

When, therefore, as the party were discussing their bacon and cabbage, before which the Rev. Doctor with much gravity said grace, Master Tom entered, Doctor Wood, who had before been rather gloomy, immediately brightened up, and made a place for Billings between himself and Mrs. Catherine.

"How do, old cock?" said that young gentleman familiarly. "How goes it, mother?" And so saying, he seized eagerly upon the jug of beer which Mr. Hayes had drawn, and from which the latter was about to help himself, and poured down his throat exactly one quart.

"Ah!" said Mr. Billings, drawing breath after a draught which he had learned accurately to gauge from the habit of drinking out of pewter measures which held precisely that quantity.—"Ah!" said Mr. Billings, drawing breath, and wiping his mouth with his sleeves,

"this is very thin stuff, old Squaretoes; but my coppers have been red-hot since last night, and they wanted a sluicing."

"Should you like some ale, dear?" said Mrs. Hayes, that fond and judicious parent.

"A quart of brandy, Tom?" said Doctor Wood. "Your papa will run down to the cellar for it in a minute."

"I'll see him hanged first!" cried Mr. Hayes, quite frightened.

"Oh, fie, now, you unnatural father!" said the Doctor.

The very name of father used to put Mr. Hayes in a fury. "I'm not his father, thank heaven!" said he.

"No, nor nobody else's," said Tom.

Mr. Hayes only muttered "Base-born brat!"

"His father was a gentleman,—that's more than *you* ever were!" screamed Mrs. Hayes. "His father was a man of spirit; no cowardly sneak of a carpenter, Mr. Hayes! Tom has noble blood in his veins, for all he has a tailor's appearance; and if his mother had had her right, she would be now in a coach-and-six."

"I wish I could find my father," said Tom; "for I think Polly Briggs and I would look mighty well in a coach-and-six." Tom fancied that if his father was a Count at the time of his birth, he must be a prince now; and, indeed, went among his companions by the latter august title.

"Ay, Tom, that you would," cried his mother, looking at him fondly.

"With a sword by my side, and a hat and feather, there's never a lord at St. James's would cut a finer figure."

After a little more of this talk, in which Mrs. Hayes let the company know her high opinion of her son—who, as usual, took care to show his extreme contempt for his step-father—the latter retired to his occupations; the lodger, Mrs. Springatt, who had never said a word all this time, retired to her apartment on the second floor; and, pulling out their pipes and tobacco, the old gentleman and the young one solaced themselves with half-an-hour's more talk and smoking; while the thrifty Mrs. Hayes, opposite to them, was busy with her books.

"What's in the confessions?" said Mr. Billings to Doctor Wood. "There were six of 'em besides Mac: two for sheep, four housebreakers; but nothing of consequence, I fancy."

"There's the paper," said Wood, archly. "Read for yourself, Tom."

Mr. Tom looked at the same time very fierce and very foolish; for, though he could drink, swear, and fight, as well as any lad of his

inches in England, reading was not among his accomplishments. "I tell you what, Doctor," said he, "—— you! have no bantering with me,—for I'm not the man that will bear it, —— me!" and he threw a tremendous swaggering look across the table.

"I want you to learn to read, Tommy dear. Look at your mother there over her books: she keeps them as neat as a scrivener now, and at twenty she could make never a stroke."

"Your godfather speaks for your good, child; and for me, thou knowest that I have promised thee a gold-headed cane and periwig on the first day that thou canst read me a column of the *Flying Post*."

"Hang the periwig!" said Mr. Tom, testily. "Let my godfather read the paper himself, if he has a liking for it."

Whereupon the old gentleman put on his spectacles, and glanced over the sheet of whitey-brown paper, which, ornamented with a picture of a gallows at the top, contained the biographies of the seven unlucky individuals who had that morning suffered the penalty of the law. With the six heroes who came first in the list we have nothing to do; but have before us a copy of the paper containing the life of No. 7, and which the Doctor read in an audible voice:

"Captain Macshane.

"The seventh victim to his own crimes was the famous highwayman, Captain Macshane, so well known as the Irish Fire-eater.

"The Captain came to the ground in a fine white lawn shirt and nightcap; and, being a Papist in his religion, was attended by Father O'Flaherty, Popish priest, and chaplain to the Bavarian Envoy.

"Captain Macshane was born of respectable parents, in the town of Clonakilty, in Ireland, being descended from most of the kings in that country. He had the honour of serving their Majesties King William and Queen Mary, and her Majesty Queen Anne, in Flanders and Spain, and obtained much credit from my Lords Marlborough and Peterborough for his valour.

"But being placed on half-pay at the end of the war, Ensign Macshane took to evil courses; and, frequenting the bagnios and dice-houses, was speedily brought to ruin.

"Being at this pass, he fell in with the notorious Captain Wood, and they two together committed many atrocious robberies in the inland counties; but these being too hot to hold them, they went into the west, where they were unknown. Here, however, the day

of retribution arrived; for, having stolen three pewter-pots from a public-house, they, under false names, were tried at Exeter, and transported for seven years beyond the sea. Thus it is seen that Justice never sleeps; but, sooner or later, is sure to overtake the criminal.

"On their return from Virginia, a quarrel about booty arose between these two, and Macshane killed Wood in a combat that took place between them near to the town of Bristol; but a waggon coming up, Macshane was obliged to fly without the ill-gotten wealth: so true is it, that wickedness never prospers.

"Two days afterwards, Macshane met the coach of Miss Macraw, a Scotch lady and heiress, going, for lumbago and gout, to the Bath. He at first would have robbed this lady; but such were his arts, that he induced her to marry him; and they lived together for seven years in the town of Eddenboro, in Scotland,—he passing under the name of Colonel Geraldine. The lady dying, and Macshane having expended all her wealth, he was obliged to resume his former evil courses, in order to save himself from starvation; whereupon he robbed a Scotch lord, by name the Lord of Whistlebinkie, of a mull of snuff; for which crime he was condemned to the Tolbooth prison at Eddenboro, in Scotland, and whipped many times in publick.

"These deserved punishments did not at all alter Captain Macshane's disposition; and on the 17th of February last, he stopped the Bavarian Envoy's coach on Blackheath, coming from Dover, and robbed his Excellency and his chaplain; taking from the former his money, watches, star, a fur-cloak, his sword (a very valuable one); and from the latter a Romish missal, out of which he was then reading, and a case-bottle."

"The Bavarian Envoy!" said Tom parenthetically. "My master, Beinkleider, was his lordship's regimental tailor in Germany, and is now making a court suit for him. It will be a matter of a hundred pounds to him, I warrant."

Doctor Wood resumed his reading. "Hum—hum! A Romish missal, out of which he was reading, and a case-bottle.

"By means of the famous Mr. Wild, this notorious criminal was brought to justice, and the case-bottle and missal have been restored to Father O'Flaherty.

"During his confinement in Newgate, Mr. Macshane could not be brought to express any contrition for his crimes, except that of having killed his commanding officer. For this Wood he pretended an excessive sorrow, and vowed that usquebaugh had been the cause of his

death,—indeed, in prison he partook of no other liquor, and drunk a bottle of it on the day before his death.

"He was visited by several of the clergy and gentry in his cell; among others, by the Popish priest whom he had robbed, Father O'Flaherty, before mentioned, who attended him likewise in his last moments (if that idolatrous worship may be called attention); and likewise by the Father's patron, the Bavarian Ambassador, his Excellency Count Maximilian de Galgenstein."

* * * * *

As old Wood came to these words, he paused to give them utterance.

"What! Max?" screamed Mrs. Hayes, letting her ink-bottle fall over her ledgers.

"Why, be hanged if it ben't my father!" said Mr. Billings.

"Your father, sure enough, unless there be others of his name, and unless the scoundrel is hanged," said the Doctor—sinking his voice, however, at the end of the sentence.

Mr. Billings broke his pipe in an agony of joy. "I think we'll have the coach now, mother," says he; "and I'm blessed if Polly Briggs shall not look as fine as a duchess."

"Polly Briggs is a low slut, Tom, and not fit for the likes of you, his Excellency's son. Oh, fie! You must be a gentleman now, sirrah; and I doubt whether I shan't take you away from that odious tailor's shop altogether."

To this proposition Mr. Billings objected altogether; for, besides Mrs. Briggs before alluded to, the young gentleman was much attached to his master's daughter, Mrs. Margaret Gretel, or Gretchen Beinkleider.

"No," says he. "There will be time to think of that hereafter, ma'am. If my Pa makes a man of me, why, of course, the shop may go to the deuce, for what I care; but we had better wait, look you, for something certain, before we give up such a pretty bird in the hand as this."

"He speaks like Solomon," said the Doctor.

"I always said he would be a credit to his old mother, didn't I, Brock?" cried Mrs. Cat, embracing her son very affectionately. "A credit to her; ay, I warrant, a real blessing! And dost thou want any money, Tom? for a lord's son must not go about without a few pieces in his pocket. And I tell thee, Tommy, thou must go and see his lordship; and thou shalt have a piece of brocade for a waistcoat, thou shalt; ay, and the silver-hilted sword I told thee of: but oh,

Tommy, Tommy! have a care, and don't be a-drawing of it in naughty company at the gaming-houses, or at the ——"

"A drawing of fiddlesticks, mother! If I go to see my father, I must have a reason for it; and instead of going with a sword in my hand, I shall take something else in it."

"The lad *is* a lad of nous," cried Doctor Wood, "although his mother does spoil him so cruelly. Look you, Madam Cat: did you not hear what he said about Beinkleider and the clothes? Tommy will just wait on the Count with his lordship's breeches. A man may learn a deal of news in the trying on of a pair of breeches."

And so it was agreed that in this manner the son should at first make his appearance before his father. Mrs. Cat gave him the piece of brocade, which, in the course of the day, was fashioned into a smart waistcoat (for Beinkleider's shop was close by, in Cavendish Square). Mrs. Gretel, with many blushes, tied a fine blue riband round his neck; and, in a pair of silk stockings, with gold buckles to his shoes, Master Billings looked a very proper young gentleman.

"And, Tommy," said his mother, blushing and hesitating, "should Max—should his lordship ask after your—want to know if your mother is alive, you can say she is, and well, and often talks of old times. And, Tommy" (after another pause), "you needn't say anything about Mr. Hayes; only say I'm quite well."

Mrs. Hayes looked at him as he marched down the street, a long, long way. Tom was proud and gay in his new costume, and was not unlike his father. As she looked, lo! Oxford Street disappeared, and she saw a green common, and a village, and a little inn. There was a soldier leading a pair of horses about on the green common; and in the inn sat a cavalier, so young, so merry, so beautiful! Oh, what slim white hands he had; and winning words, and tender, gentle blue eyes! Was it not an honour to a country lass that such a noble gentleman should look at her for a moment? Had he not some charm about him that she must needs obey when he whispered in her ear, "Come, follow me!" As she walked towards the lane that morning, how well she remembered each spot as she passed it, and the look it wore for the last time! How the smoke was rising from the pastures, how the fish were jumping and plashing in the mill-stream! There was the church, with all its windows lighted up with gold, and yonder were the reapers sweeping down the brown corn. She tried to sing as she went up the hill—what was it? She could not remember; but oh, how well she remembered the sound of the horse's hoofs, as they came quicker, quicker—nearer, nearer! How noble he looked on his great

horse! Was he thinking of her, or were they all silly words which he spoke last night, merely to pass away the time and deceive poor girls with? Would he remember them, would he?

* * * * *

"Cat my dear," here cried Mr. Brock, *alias* Captain, *alias* Doctor Wood, "here's the meat a-getting cold, and I am longing for my breakfast."

As they went in he looked her hard in the face. "What, *still* at it, you silly girl? I've been watching you these five minutes, Cat; and be hanged but I think a word from Galgenstein, and you would follow him as a fly does a treacle-pot!"

They went into breakfast; but though there was a hot shoulder of mutton and onion-sauce—Mrs. Catherine's favourite dish—she never touched a morsel of it.

In the meanwhile Mr. Thomas Billings, in his new clothes which his mamma had given him, in his new riband which the fair Miss Beinkleider had tied round his neck, and having his Excellency's breeches wrapped in a silk handkerchief in his right hand, turned down in the direction of Whitehall, where the Bavarian Envoy lodged. But, before he waited on him, Mr. Billings, being excessively pleased with his personal appearance, made an early visit to Mrs. Briggs, who lived in the neighbourhood of Swallow Street; and who, after expressing herself with much enthusiasm regarding her Tommy's good looks, immediately asked him what he would stand to drink? Raspberry gin being suggested, a pint of that liquor was sent for; and so great was the confidence and intimacy subsisting between these two young people, that the reader will be glad to hear that Mrs. Polly accepted every shilling of the money which Tom Billings had received from his mamma the day before; nay, could with difficulty be prevented from seizing upon the cut-velvet breeches which he was carrying to the nobleman for whom they were made. Having paid his adieux to Mrs. Polly, Mr. Billings departed to visit his father.

CHAPTER IX.

INTERVIEW BETWEEN COUNT GALGENSTEIN AND MASTER THOMAS BILLINGS, WHEN HE INFORMS THE COUNT OF HIS PARENTAGE.

I DON'T know in all this miserable world a more miserable spectacle than that of a young fellow of five or six and forty. The British army, that nursery of valour, turns out many of the young fellows I mean: who, having flaunted in dragoon uniforms from seventeen to six-and-thirty; having bought, sold, or swapped during that period some two hundred horses; having played, say fifteen thousand games at billiards; having drunk some six thousand bottles of wine; having consumed a reasonable number of Nugee coats, split many dozen pairs of high-heeled Hoby boots, and read the newspaper and the army-list duly, retire from the service when they have attained their eighth lustre, and saunter through the world, trailing from London to Cheltenham, and from Boulogne to Paris, and from Paris to Baden, their idleness, their ill-health, and their *ennui*. "In the morning of youth," and when seen along with whole troops of their companions, these flowers look gaudy and brilliant enough; but there is no object more dismal than one of them alone, and in its autumnal or seedy state. My friend, Captain Popjoy, is one who has arrived at this condition, and whom everybody knows by his title of Father Pop. A kinder, simpler, more empty-headed fellow does not exist. He is forty-seven years old, and appears a young, good-looking man of sixty. At the time of the Army of Occupation he really was

as good-looking a man as any in the Dragoons. He now uses all sorts of stratagems to cover the bald place on his head, by combing certain thin grey side-locks over it. He has, in revenge, a pair of enormous moustaches, which he dyes of the richest blue-black. His nose is a good deal larger and redder than it used to be; his eyelids have grown flat and heavy; and a little pair of red, watery eyeballs float in the midst of them: it seems as if the light which was once in those sickly green pupils had extravasated into the white part of the eye. If Pop's legs are not so firm and muscular as they used to be in those days when he took such leaps into White's buckskins, in revenge his waist is much larger. He wears a very good coat, however, and a waistband, which he lets out after dinner. Before ladies he blushes, and is as silent as a schoolboy. He calls them "modest women." His society is chiefly among young lads belonging to his former profession. He knows the best wine to be had at each tavern or café, and the waiters treat him with much respectful familiarity. He knows the names of every one of them; and shouts out, "Send Markwell here!" or, "Tell Cuttriss to give us a bottle of the yellow seal!" or, "Dizzy voo, Monsure Borrel, noo donny shampang frappy," &c. He always makes the salad or the punch, and dines out three hundred days in the year: the other days you see him in a two-franc eating-house at Paris, or prowling about Rupert Street or St. Martin's Court, where you get a capital cut of meat for eightpence. He has decent lodgings and scrupulously clean linen; his animal functions are still tolerably well preserved, his spiritual have evaporated long since; he sleeps well, has no conscience, believes himself to be a respectable fellow, and is tolerably happy on the days when he is asked out to dinner.

Poor Pop is not very high in the scale of created beings; but, if you fancy there is none lower, you are in egregious error. There was once a man who had a mysterious exhibition of an animal quite unknown to naturalists, called "the wusser." Those curious individuals who desired to see the *wusser* were introduced into an apartment where appeared before them nothing more than a little lean, shrivelled, hideous, blear-eyed, mangy pig. Every one cried out "Swindle!" and "Shame!" "Patience, gentlemen, be heasy," said the showman: "look at that there hanimal; it's a perfect phenomaly of hugliness: I engage you never see such a pig." Nobody ever had seen. "Now, gentlemen," said he, "I'll keep my promise, has per bill; and bad as that there pig is, look at this here" (he showed another). "Look at this here, and you'll see at once that it's *a wusser*." In like manner

the Popjoy breed is bad enough, but it serves only to show off the Galgenstein race; which is *wusser*.

Galgenstein had led a very gay life, as the saying is, for the last fifteen years; such a gay one, that he had lost all capacity of enjoyment by this time, and only possessed inclinations without powers of gratifying them. He had grown to be exquisitely curious and fastidious about meat and drink, for instance, and all that he wanted was an appetite. He carried about with him a French cook, who could not make him eat; a doctor, who could not make him well; a mistress, of whom he was heartily sick after two days; a priest, who had been a favourite of the exemplary Dubois, and by turns used to tickle him by the imposition of penance, or by the repetition of a tale from the *recueil* of Nocé, or La Fare. All his appetites were wasted and worn; only some monstrosity would galvanize them into momentary action. He was in that effete state to which many noblemen of his time had arrived; who were ready to believe in ghost-raising or in gold-making, or to retire into monasteries and wear hair-shirts, or to dabble in conspiracies, or to die in love with little cook-maids of fifteen, or to pine for the smiles or at the frowns of a prince of the blood, or to go mad at the refusal of a chamberlain's key. The last gratification he remembered to have enjoyed was that of riding bare-headed in a soaking rain for three hours by the side of his Grand Duke's mistress's coach; taking the *pas* of Count Krähwinkel, who challenged him, and was run through the body for this very dispute. Galgenstein gained a rheumatic gout by it, which put him to tortures for many months; and was further gratified with the post of English Envoy. He had a fortune, he asked no salary, and could look the envoy very well. Father O'Flaherty did all the duties, and furthermore acted as a spy over the ambassador—a sinecure post; for the man had no feelings, wishes, or opinions—absolutely none.

"Upon my life, father," said this worthy man, "I care for nothing. You have been talking for an hour about the Regent's death, and the Duchess of Phalaris, and sly old Fleury, and what not; and I care just as much as if you told me that one of my Bauers at Galgenstein had killed a pig; or as if my lackey, La Rose yonder, had made love to my mistress."

"He does!" said the reverend gentleman.

"Ah, Monsieur l'Abbé!" said La Rose, who was arranging his master's enormous court periwig, "you are, hélas! wrong. Monsieur le Comte will not be angry at my saying that I wish the accusation were true."

The Count did not take the slightest notice of La Rose's wit, but continued his own complaints.

"I tell you, Abbé, I care for nothing. I lost a thousand guineas t'other night at basset; I wish to my heart I could have been vexed about it. Egad! I remember the day when to lose a hundred made me half mad for a month. Well, next day I had my revenge at dice, and threw thirteen mains. There was some delay; a call for fresh bones, I think; and would you believe it? I fell asleep with the box in my hand!"

"A desperate case, indeed," said the Abbé.

"If it had not been for Krähwinkel I should have been a dead man, that's positive. That pinking him saved me."

"I make no doubt of it," said the Abbé. "Had your Excellency not run him through, he, without a doubt, would have done the same for you."

"Psha! you mistake my words, Monsieur l'Abbé" (yawning). "I mean—what cursed chocolate!—that I was dying for want of excitement. Not that I care for dying; no, d—— me, if I do!"

"*When* you do, your Excellency means," said the Abbé, a fat, grey-haired Irishman, from the Irlandois College at Paris.

His Excellency did not laugh, nor understand jokes of any kind; he was of an undeviating stupidity, and only replied, "Sir, I mean what I say. I don't care for living: no, nor for dying either; but I can speak as well as another, and I'll thank you not to be correcting my phrases as if I were one of your cursed school-boys, and not a gentleman of fortune and blood."

Herewith the Count, who had uttered four sentences about himself (he never spoke of anything else), sunk back on his pillows again, quite exhausted by his eloquence. The Abbé, who had a seat and a table by the bedside, resumed the labours which had brought him into the room in the morning, and busied himself with papers, which occasionally he handed over to his superior for approval.

Presently Monsieur La Rose appeared.

"Here is a person with clothes from Mr. Beinkleider's. Will your Excellency see him, or shall I bid him leave the clothes?"

The Count was very much fatigued by this time; he had signed three papers, and read the first half-dozen lines of a pair of them.

"Bid the fellow come in, La Rose; and, hark ye, give me my wig: one must show one's self to be a gentleman before these scoundrels." And he therefore mounted a large chestnut-coloured, orange-scented pyramid of horse-hair, which was to awe the new-comer.

He was a lad of about seventeen, in a smart waistcoat and a blue riband: our friend Tom Billings, indeed. He carried under his arm the Count's destined breeches. He did not seem in the least awed, however, by his Excellency's appearance, but looked at him with a great degree of curiosity and boldness. In the same manner he surveyed the chaplain, and then nodded to him with a kind look of recognition.

"Where have I seen the lad?" said the father. "Oh, I have it! My good friend, you were at the hanging yesterday, I think?"

Mr. Billings gave a very significant nod with his head. "I never miss," said he.

"What a young Turk! And pray, sir, do you go for pleasure, or for business?"

"Business! what do you mean by business?"

"Oh, I did not know whether you might be brought up to the trade, or your relations be undergoing the operation."

"My relations," said Mr. Billings, proudly, and staring the Count full in the face, "was not made for no such thing. I'm a tailor now, but I'm a gentleman's son: as good a man, ay, as his lordship there: for *you* a'n't his lordship—you're the Popish priest you are; and we were very near giving you a touch of a few Protestant stones, master."

The Count began to be a little amused; he was pleased to see the Abbé look alarmed, or even foolish.

"Egad, Abbé," said he, "you turn as white as a sheet."

"I don't fancy being murdered, my lord," said the Abbé, hastily; "and murdered for a good work. It was but to be useful to yonder poor Irishman, who saved me as a prisoner in Flanders, when Marlborough would have hung me up like poor Macshane himself was yesterday."

"Ah!" said the Count, bursting out with some energy, "I was thinking who the fellow could be, ever since he robbed me on the Heath. I recollect the scoundrel now: he was a second in a duel I had here in the year 6."

"Along with Major Wood, behind Montague House," said Mr. Billings. "*I*'ve heard on it." And here he looked more knowing than ever.

"*You!*" cried the Count, more and more surprised. "And pray who the devil *are* you?"

"My name's Billings."

"Billings?" said the Count.

"I come out of Warwickshire," said Mr. Billings.

"Indeed!"

"I was born at Birmingham town."

"Were you, really!"

"My mother's name was Hall," continued Billings, in a solemn voice. "I was put out to nurse along with John Billings, a blacksmith; and my father run away. *Now* do you know who I am?"

"Why, upon honour, now," said the Count, who was amused,—"upon honour, Mr. Billings, I have not that advantage."

"Well, then, my lord, *you're my father!*"

Mr. Billings, when he said this, came forward to the Count with a theatrical air; and, flinging down the breeches of which he was the bearer, held out his arms and stared, having very little doubt but that his lordship would forthwith spring out of bed and hug him to his heart. A similar piece of *naïveté* many fathers of families have, I have no doubt, remarked in their children; who, not caring for their parents a single doit, conceive, nevertheless, that the latter are bound to show all sorts of affection for them. His lordship did move, but backwards towards the wall, and began pulling at the bell-rope with an expression of the most intense alarm.

"Keep back, sirrah!—keep back! Suppose I *am* your father, do you want to murder me? Good heavens, how the boy smells of gin and tobacco! Don't turn away, my lad! sit down there at a proper distance. And, La Rose, give him some eau-de-Cologne, and get a cup of coffee. Well, now, go on with your story. Egad, my dear Abbé, I think it is very likely that what the lad says is true."

"If it is a family conversation," said the Abbé, "I had better leave you."

"Oh, for heaven's sake, no! I could not stand the boy alone. Now, Mister ah!—What's-your-name? Have the goodness to tell your story."

Mr. Billings was wofully disconcerted; for his mother and he had agreed that as soon as his father saw him he would be recognized at once, and, mayhap, made heir to the estates and title; in which, being disappointed, he very sulkily went on with his narrative, and detailed many of those events with which the reader has already been made acquainted. The Count asked the boy's mother's Christian name, and being told it, his memory at once returned to him.

"What! are you little Cat's son?" said his Excellency. "By heavens, mon cher Abbé, a charming creature, but a tigress—positively a tigress. I recollect the whole affair now. She's a little, fresh, black-haired woman, a'n't she? with a sharp nose and thick eyebrows,

ay? Ah! yes, yes," went on my lord, "I recollect her, I recollect her. It was at Birmingham I first met her: she was my Lady Trippet's woman, wasn't she?"

"She was no such thing," said Mr. Billings, hotly. "Her aunt kept the 'Bugle Inn' on Waltham Green, and your lordship seduced her."

"Seduced her! Oh, 'gad, so I did. Stap me, now, I did. Yes, I made her jump on my black horse, and bore her off like—like Æneas bore his wife away from the siege of Rome! hey, l'Abbé?"

"The events were precisely similar," said the Abbé. "It is wonderful what a memory you have!"

"I was always remarkable for it," continued his Excellency. "Well, where was I,—at the black horse? Yes, at the black horse. Well, I mounted her on the black horse, and rode her *en croupe*, egad —ha, ha!—to Birmingham; and there we billed and cooed together like a pair of turtle-doves: yes—ha!—that we did!"

"And this, I suppose, is the end of some of the *billings?*" said the Abbé, pointing to Mr. Tom.

"Billings! what do you mean? Yes—oh—ah—a pun, a calembourg. *Fi donc*, M. l'Abbé." And then, after the wont of very stupid people, M. de Galgenstein went on to explain to the Abbé his own pun. "Well, but to proceed," cries he. "We lived together at Birmingham, and I was going to be married to a rich heiress, egad! when what do you think this little Cat does? She murders me, egad! and makes me *manquer* the marriage. Twenty thousand, I think it was; and I wanted the money in those days. Now, wasn't she an abominable monster, that mother of yours, hey, Mr. a—What's-your-name?"

"She served you right!" said Mr. Billings, with a great oath, starting up out of all patience.

"Fellow!" said his Excellency, quite aghast, "do you know to whom you speak?—to a nobleman of seventy-eight descents; a count of the Holy Roman empire; a representative of a sovereign? Ha, egad! Don't stamp, fellow, if you hope for my protection."

"D—n your protection!" said Mr. Billings, in a fury. "Curse you and your protection too! I'm a free-born Briton, and no —— French Papist! And any man who insults my mother—ay, or calls me feller, had better look to himself and the two eyes in his head, I can tell him!" And with this Mr. Billings put himself into the most approved attitude of the Cockpit, and invited his father, the reverend gentleman, and M. La Rose the valet, to engage with him in a

pugilistic encounter. The two latter, the Abbé especially, seemed dreadfully frightened; but the Count now looked on with much interest; and giving utterance to a feeble kind of chuckle, which lasted for about half a minute, said,—

"Paws off, Pompey! You young hang-dog, you—egad, yes, aha! 'pon honour, you're a lad of spirit; some of your father's spunk in you, hey? I know him by that oath. Why, sir, when I was sixteen, I used to swear—to swear, egad, like a Thames waterman, and exactly in this fellow's way! Buss me, my lad; no, kiss my hand. That will do"—and he held out a very lean yellow hand, peering from a pair of yellow ruffles. It shook very much, and the shaking made all the rings upon it shine only the more.

"Well," says Mr. Billings, "if you wasn't a-going to abuse me nor mother, I don't care if I shake hands with you. I ain't proud!"

The Abbé laughed with great glee; and that very evening sent off to his court a most ludicrous, *spicy* description of the whole scene of meeting between this amiable father and child; in which he said that young Billings was the *élève favori* of M. Kitch, Ecuyer, *le bourreau de Londres*, and which made the Duke's mistress laugh so much that she vowed that the Abbé should have a bishopric on his return: for, with such store of wisdom, look you, my son, was the world governed in those days.

The Count and his offspring meanwhile conversed with some cordiality. The former informed the latter of all the diseases to which he was subject, his manner of curing them, his great consideration as chamberlain to the Duke of Bavaria; how he wore his court suits, and of a particular powder which he had invented for the hair; how, when he was seventeen, he had run away with a canoness, egad! who was afterwards locked up in a convent, and grew to be sixteen stone in weight; how he remembered the time when ladies did not wear patches; and how the Duchess of Marlborough boxed his ears when he was so high, because he wanted to kiss her.

All these important anecdotes took some time in the telling, and were accompanied by many profound moral remarks; such as, "I can't abide garlic, nor white-wine, stap me! nor Sauerkraut, though his Highness eats half a bushel per day. I ate it the first time at court; but when they brought it me a second time, I refused—refused, split me and grill me if I didn't! Everybody stared; his Highness looked as fierce as a Turk; and that infernal Krähwinkel (my dear, I did for him afterwards)—that cursed Krähwinkel, I say, looked as pleased as possible, and whispered to Countess Fritsch,

'Blitzchen Frau Gräfinn,' says he, 'it's all over with Galgenstein.' What did I do? I had the *entrée*, and demanded it. 'Altesse,' says I, falling on one knee, 'I ate no Kraut at dinner to-day. You remarked it: I saw your Highness remark it.'

"'I did, M. le Comte,' said his Highness, gravely.

"I had almost tears in my eyes; but it was necessary to come to a resolution, you know. 'Sir,' said I, 'I speak with deep grief to your Highness, who are my benefactor, my friend, my father; but of this I am resolved, I WILL NEVER EAT SAUERKRAUT MORE: it don't agree with me. After being laid up for four weeks by the last dish of Sauerkraut of which I partook, I may say with confidence—*it don't* agree with me. By impairing my health, it impairs my intellect, and weakens my strength; and both I would keep for your Highness's service.'

"'Tut, tut!' said his Highness. 'Tut, tut, tut!' Those were his very words.

"'Give me my sword or my pen,' said I. 'Give me my sword or my pen, and with these Maximilian de Galgenstein is ready to serve you; but sure,—sure, a great prince will pity the weak health of a faithful subject, who does not know how to eat Sauerkraut?' His Highness was walking about the room: I was still on my knees, and stretched forward my hand to seize his coat.

"'GEHT ZUM TEUFEL, sir!' said he, in a loud voice (it means 'Go to the deuce,' my dear),—'Geht zum Teufel, and eat what you like!' With this he went out of the room abruptly; leaving in my hand one of his buttons, which I keep to this day. As soon as I was alone, amazed by his great goodness and bounty, I sobbed aloud—cried like a child" (the Count's eyes filled and winked at the very recollection), "and when I went back into the card-room, stepping up to Krähwinkel, 'Count,' says I, 'who looks foolish now?'—Hey there, La Rose, give me the diamond —— Yes, that was the very pun I made, and very good it was thought. 'Krähwinkel,' says I, '*who looks foolish now?*' and from that day to this I was never at a court-day asked to eat Sauerkraut—*never*."

"Hey there, La Rose! Bring me that diamond snuff-box in the drawer of my *secrétaire;*" and the snuff-box was brought. "Look at it, my dear," said the Count, "for I saw you seemed to doubt. There is the button—the very one that came off his grace's coat."

Mr. Billings received it, and twisted it about with a stupid air. The story had quite mystified him; for he did not dare yet to think his father was a fool—his respect for the aristocracy prevented him.

When the Count's communications had ceased, which they did as soon as the story of the Sauerkraut was finished, a silence of some minutes ensued. Mr. Billings was trying to comprehend the circumstances above narrated; his lordship was exhausted; the chaplain had quitted the room directly the word Sauerkraut was mentioned—he knew what was coming. His lordship looked for some time at his son; who returned the gaze with his mouth wide open. "Well," said the Count—"well, sir? What are you sitting there for? If you have nothing to say, sir, you had better go. I had you here to amuse me—split me—and not to sit there staring!"

Mr. Billings rose in a fury.

"Hark ye, my lad," said the Count, "tell La Rose to give thee five guineas, and, ah—come again some morning. A nice, well-grown young lad," mused the Count, as Master Tommy walked wondering out of the apartment; "a pretty fellow enough, and intelligent too."

"Well, he *is* an odd fellow, my father," thought Mr. Billings, as he walked out, having received the sum offered to him. And he immediately went to call upon his friend Polly Briggs, from whom he had separated in the morning.

What was the result of their interview is not at all necessary to the progress of this history. Having made her, however, acquainted with the particulars of his visit to his father, he went to his mother's, and related to her all that had occurred.

Poor thing, she was very differently interested in the issue of it!

CHAPTER X.

SHOWING HOW GALGENSTEIN AND MRS. CAT RECOGNIZE EACH OTHER IN MARYLEBONE GARDENS—AND HOW THE COUNT DRIVES HER HOME IN HIS CARRIAGE.

BOUT a month after the touching conversation above related, there was given, at Marylebone Gardens, a grand concert and entertainment, at which the celebrated Madame Aménaïde, a dancer of the theatre at Paris, was to perform, under the patronage of several English and foreign noblemen; among whom was his Excellency the Bavarian Envoy. Madame Aménaïde was, in fact, no other than the *maîtresse en titre* of the Monsieur de Galgenstein, who had her a great bargain from the Duke de Rohan-Chabot at Paris.

It is not our purpose to make a great and learned display here, otherwise the costumes of the company assembled at this fête might afford scope for at least half-a-dozen pages of fine writing; and we might give, if need were, specimens of the very songs and music sung on the occasion. Does not the Burney collection of music, at the British Museum, afford one an ample store of songs from which to choose? Are there not the memoirs of Colley Cibber? those of Mrs. Clark, the daughter of Colley? Is there not Congreve, and Farquhar—nay, and at a pinch, the "Dramatic Biography," or even the *Spectator*, from which the observant genius might borrow passages, and construct pretty antiquarian figments? Leave we these trifles to meaner souls! Our business is not with the breeches and periwigs,

with the hoops and patches, but with the divine hearts of men, and the passions which agitate them. What need, therefore, have we to say that on this evening, after the dancing, the music, and the fireworks, Monsieur de Galgenstein felt the strange and welcome pangs of appetite, and was picking a cold chicken, along with some other friends, in an arbour—a cold chicken, with an accompaniment of a bottle of champagne—when he was led to remark that a very handsome, plump little person, in a gorgeous stiff damask gown and petticoat, was sauntering up and down the walk running opposite his supping-place, and bestowing continual glances towards his Excellency. The lady, whoever she was, was in a mask, such as ladies of high and low fashion wore at public places in those days, and had a male companion. He was a lad of only seventeen, marvellously well dressed—indeed, no other than the Count's own son, Mr. Thomas Billings; who had at length received from his mother the silver-hilted sword, and the wig, which that affectionate parent had promised to him.

In the course of the month which had elapsed since the interview that has been described in the former chapter, Mr. Billings had several times had occasion to wait on his father; but though he had, according to her wishes, frequently alluded to the existence of his mother, the Count had never at any time expressed the slightest wish to renew his acquaintance with that lady; who, if she had seen him, had only seen him by stealth.

The fact is, that after Billings had related to her the particulars of his first meeting with his Excellency; which ended, like many of the latter visits, in nothing at all; Mrs. Hayes had found some pressing business, which continually took her to Whitehall, and had been prowling from day to day about Monsieur de Galgenstein's lodgings. Four or five times in the week, as his Excellency stepped into his coach, he might have remarked, had he chosen, a woman in a black hood, who was looking most eagerly into his eyes: but those eyes had long since left off the practice of observing; and Madam Catherine's visits had so far gone for nothing.

On this night, however, inspired by gaiety and drink, the Count had been amazingly stricken by the gait and ogling of the lady in the mask. The Reverend O'Flaherty, who was with him, and had observed the figure in the black cloak, recognized, or thought he recognized, her. "It is the woman who dogs your Excellency every day," said he. "She is with that tailor lad who loves to see people hanged—your Excellency's son, I mean." And he was just about to

warn the Count of a conspiracy evidently made against him, and that the son had brought, most likely, the mother to play her arts upon him—he was just about, I say, to show to the Count the folly and danger of renewing an old *liaison* with a woman such as he had described Mrs. Cat to be, when his Excellency, starting up, and interrupting his ghostly adviser at the very beginning of his sentence, said, "Egad, l'Abbé, you are right—it *is* my son, and a mighty smart-looking creature with him. Hey! Mr. What's-your-name—Tom, you rogue, don't you know your own father?" And so saying, and cocking his beaver on one side, Monsieur de Galgenstein strutted jauntily after Mr. Billings and the lady.

It was the first time that the Count had formally recognized his son.

"Tom, you rogue," stopped at this, and the Count came up. He had a white velvet suit, covered over with stars and orders, a neat modest wig and bag, and peach-coloured silk-stockings with silver clasps. The lady in the mask gave a start as his Excellency came forward. "Law, mother, don't squeege so," said Tom. The poor woman was trembling in every limb; but she had presence of mind to "squeege" Tom a great deal harder; and the latter took the hint, I suppose, and was silent.

The splendid Count came up. Ye gods, how his embroidery glittered in the lamps! What a royal exhalation of musk and bergamot came from his wig, his handkerchief, and his grand lace ruffles and frills! A broad yellow riband passed across his breast, and ended at his hip in a shining diamond cross—a diamond cross, and a diamond sword-hilt! Was anything ever seen so beautiful? And might not a poor woman tremble when such a noble creature drew near to her, and deigned, from the height of his rank and splendour, to look down upon her? As Jove came down to Semele in state, in his habits of ceremony, with all the grand cordons of his orders blazing about his imperial person—thus dazzling, magnificent, triumphant, the great Galgenstein descended towards Mrs. Catherine. Her cheeks glowed red hot under her coy velvet mask, her heart thumped against the whalebone prison of her stays. What a delicious storm of vanity was raging in her bosom! What a rush of long-pent recollections burst forth at the sound of that enchanting voice!

As you wind up a hundred-guinea chronometer with a twopenny watch-key—as by means of a dirty wooden plug you set all the waters of Versailles a-raging, and splashing, and storming—in like manner,

and by like humble agents, were Mrs. Catherine's tumultuous passions set going. The Count, we have said, slipped up to his son, and merely saying, "How do, Tom?" cut the young gentleman altogether, and passing round to the lady's side, said, "Madam, 'tis a charming evening—egad it is!" She almost fainted: it was the old voice. There he was, after seventeen years, once more at her side!

Now I know what I could have done. I can turn out a quotation from Sophocles (by looking to the index) as well as another: I can throw off a bit of fine writing too, with passion, similes, and a moral at the end. What, pray, is the last sentence but one but the very finest writing? Suppose, for example, I had made Maximilian, as he stood by the side of Catherine, look up towards the clouds, and exclaim, in the words of the voluptuous Cornelius Nepos,

> Α�έναοι νεφέλαι
> Ἀρθῶμεν φανεραὶ
> Δροσερὰν φύσιν εὐάγητοι, κ. τ. λ.

Or suppose, again, I had said, in a style still more popular:—The Count advanced towards the maiden. They both were mute for a while; and only the beating of her heart interrupted that thrilling and passionate silence. Ah, what years of buried joys and fears, hopes and disappointments, arose from their graves in the far past, and in those brief moments flitted before the united ones! How sad was that delicious retrospect, and oh, how sweet! The tears that rolled down the cheek of each were bubbles from the choked and moss-grown wells of youth; the sigh that heaved each bosom had some lurking odours in it—memories of the fragrance of boyhood, echoes of the hymns of the young heart! Thus is it ever—for these blessed recollections the soul always has a place; and while crime perishes, and sorrow is forgotten, the beautiful alone is eternal.

"O golden legends, written in the skies!" mused de Galgenstein, "ye shine as ye did in the olden days! *We* change, but *ye* speak ever the same language. Gazing in your abysmal depths, the feeble ratioci ——"

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There, now, are six columns* of the best writing to be found in this or any other book. Galgenstein has quoted Euripides thrice, Plato once, Lycophron nine times, besides extracts from the Latin

* There *were* six columns, as mentioned by the accurate Mr. Solomons; but we have withdrawn two pages and three quarters, because, although our

syntax and the minor Greek poets. Catherine's passionate embreathings are of the most fashionable order; and I call upon the ingenious critic of the X—— newspaper to say whether they do not possess the real impress of the giants of the olden time—the real Platonic smack, in a word? Not that I want in the least to show off; but it is as well, every now and then, to show the public what one *can* do.

Instead, however, of all this rant and nonsense, how much finer is the speech that the Count really did make! "It is a very fine evening, —egad it is!" The "egad" did the whole business: Mrs. Cat was as much in love with him now as ever she had been; and, gathering up all her energies, she said, "It is dreadful hot too, I think;" and with this she made a curtsey.

"Stifling, split me!" added his Excellency. "What do you say, madam, to a rest in an arbour, and a drink of something cool?"

"Sir!" said the lady, drawing back.

"Oh, a drink—a drink by all means," exclaimed Mr. Billings, who was troubled with a perpetual thirst. "Come, mo——, Mrs. Jones, I mean: you're fond of a glass of cold punch, you know; and the rum here is prime, I can tell you."

The lady in the mask consented with some difficulty to the proposal of Mr. Billings, and was led by the two gentlemen into an arbour, where she was seated between them; and some wax-candles being lighted, punch was brought.

She drank one or two glasses very eagerly, and so did her two companions; although it was evident to see, from the flushed looks of both of them, that they had little need of any such stimulus. The Count, in the midst of his champagne, it must be said, had been amazingly stricken and scandalized by the appearance of such a youth as Billings in a public place, with a lady under his arm. He was, the reader will therefore understand, in the moral stage of liquor; and when he issued out, it was not merely with the intention of examining Mr. Billings's female companion, but of administering to him some sound correction for venturing, at his early period of life, to form any such acquaintances. On joining Billings, his Excellency's first step was naturally to examine the lady. After they had been sitting for a while over their punch, he bethought him of his original purpose, and began to address a number of moral remarks to his son.

correspondent has been excessively eloquent, according to custom, we were anxious to come to the facts of the story.

Mr. Solomons, by sending to our office, may have the cancelled passages. —O. Y.

We have already given some specimens of Monsieur de Galgenstein's sober conversation; and it is hardly necessary to trouble the reader with any further reports of his speeches. They were intolerably stupid and dull; as egotistical as his morning lecture had been, and a hundred times more rambling and prosy. If Cat had been in the possession of her sober senses, she would have seen in five minutes that her ancient lover was a ninny, and have left him with scorn; but she was under the charm of old recollections, and the sound of that silly voice was to her magical. As for Mr. Billings, he allowed his Excellency to continue his prattle; only frowning, yawning, cursing occasionally, but drinking continually.

So the Count descanted at length upon the enormity of young Billings's early *liaisons;* and then he told his own, in the year four, with a burgomaster's daughter at Ratisbon, when he was in the Elector of Bavaria's service—then, after Blenheim, when he had come over to the Duke of Marlborough, when a physician's wife at Bonn poisoned herself for him, &c. &c.; of a piece with the story of the canoness, which has been recorded before. All the tales were true. A clever, ugly man every now and then is successful with the ladies; but a handsome fool is irresistible. Mrs. Cat listened and listened. Good heavens! she had heard all these tales before, and recollected the place and the time—how she was hemming a handkerchief for Max; who came round and kissed her, vowing that the physician's wife was nothing compared to her—how he was tired, and lying on the sofa, just come home from shooting. How handsome he looked! Cat thought he was only the handsomer now; and looked more grave and thoughtful, the dear fellow!

The garden was filled with a vast deal of company of all kinds, and parties were passing every moment before the arbour where our trio sat. About half-an-hour after his Excellency had quitted his own box and party, the Rev. Mr. O'Flaherty came discreetly round, to examine the proceedings of his diplomatical *chef.* The lady in the mask was listening with all her might; Mr. Billings was drawing figures on the table with punch; and the Count talking incessantly. The Father Confessor listened for a moment; and then, with something resembling an oath, walked away to the entry of the gardens, where his Excellency's gilt coach, with three footmen, was waiting to carry him back to London. "Get me a chair, Joseph," said his Reverence, who infinitely preferred a seat gratis in the coach. "That fool," muttered he, "will not move for this hour." The reverend gentleman knew that, when the Count was on the subject of the

physician's wife, his discourses were intolerably long; and took upon himself, therefore, to disappear, along with the rest of the Count's party; who procured other conveyances, and returned to their homes.

After this quiet shadow had passed before the Count's box, many groups of persons passed and repassed; and among them was no other than Mrs. Polly Briggs, to whom we have been already introduced. Mrs. Polly was in company with one or two other ladies, and leaning on the arm of a gentleman with large shoulders and calves, a fierce cock to his hat, and a shabby genteel air. His name was Mr. Moffat, and his present occupation was that of door-keeper at a gambling-house in Covent Garden; where, though he saw many thousands pass daily under his eyes, his own salary amounted to no more than four-and-sixpence weekly,—a sum quite insufficient to maintain him in the rank which he held.

Mr. Moffat had, however, received some funds—amounting, indeed, to a matter of twelve guineas—within the last month, and was treating Mrs. Briggs very generously to the concert. It may be as well to say that every one of the twelve guineas had come out of Mrs. Polly's own pocket; who, in return, had received them from Mr. Billings. And as the reader may remember that, on the day of Tommy's first interview with his father, he had previously paid a visit to Mrs. Briggs, having under his arm a pair of breeches, which Mrs. Briggs coveted—he should now be informed that she desired these breeches, not for pincushions, but for Mr. Moffat, who had long been in want of a pair.

Having thus episodically narrated Mr. Moffat's history, let us state that he, his lady, and their friends, passed before the Count's arbour, joining in a melodious chorus to a song which one of the society, an actor of Betterton's, was singing:—

"'Tis my will, when I'm dead, that no tear shall be shed,
No 'Hic jacet' be graved on my stone;
But pour o'er my ashes a bottle of red,
And say a good fellow is gone,
My brave boys!
And say a good fellow is gone."

"My brave boys" was given with vast emphasis by the party; Mr. Moffat growling it in a rich bass, and Mrs. Briggs in a soaring treble. As to the notes, when quavering up to the skies, they excited various emotions among the people in the gardens. "Silence them blackguards!" shouted a barber, who was taking a pint of small beer

along with his lady. "Stop that there infernal screeching!" said a couple of ladies, who were sipping ratafia in company with two pretty fellows.

"Dang it, it's Polly!" said Mr. Tom Billings, bolting out of the box, and rushing towards the sweet-voiced Mrs. Briggs. When he reached her, which he did quickly, and made his arrival known by tipping Mrs. Briggs slightly on the waist, and suddenly bouncing down before her and her friend, both of the latter drew back somewhat startled.

"Law, Mr. Billings!" says Mrs. Polly, rather coolly, "is it you? Who thought of seeing you here?"

"Who's this here young feller?" says towering Mr. Moffat, with his bass voice.

"It's Mr. Billings, cousin, a friend of mine," said Mrs. Polly, beseechingly.

"Oh, cousin, if it's a friend of yours, he should know better how to conduct himself, that's all. Har you a dancing-master, young feller, that you cut them there capers before gentlemen?" growled Mr. Moffat; who hated Mr. Billings, for the excellent reason that he lived upon him.

"Dancing-master be hanged!" said Mr. Billings, with becoming spirit: "if you call me dancing-master, I'll pull your nose."

"What!" roared Mr. Moffat, "pull my nose? *My nose!* I'll tell you what, my lad, if you durst move me, I'll cut your throat, curse me!"

"Oh, Moffy—cousin, I mean—'tis a shame to treat the poor boy so. Go away, Tommy; do go away; my cousin's in liquor," whimpered Madam Briggs, who really thought that the great door-keeper would put his threat into execution.

"Tommy!" said Mr. Moffat, frowning horribly; "Tommy to me too? Dog, get out of my ssss——" *sight* was the word which Mr. Moffat intended to utter; but he was interrupted; for, to the astonishment of his friends and himself, Mr. Billings did actually make a spring at the monster's nose, and caught it so firmly, that the latter could not finish his sentence.

The operation was performed with amazing celerity; and, having concluded it, Mr. Billings sprung back, and whisked from out its sheath that new silver-hilted sword which his mamma had given him. "Now," said he, with a fierce kind of calmness, "now for the throat-cutting, cousin: I'm your man!"

How the brawl might have ended, no one can say, had the two

gentlemen actually crossed swords; but Mrs. Polly, with a wonderful presence of mind, restored peace by exclaiming, "Hush, hush! the beaks, the beaks!" Upon which, with one common instinct, the whole party made a rush for the garden gates, and disappeared into the fields. Mrs. Briggs knew her company: there was something in the very name of a constable which sent them all a-flying.

After running a reasonable time, Mr. Billings stopped. But the great Moffat was nowhere to be seen, and Polly Briggs had likewise vanished. Then Tom bethought him that he would go back to his mother; but, arriving at the gate of the gardens, was refused admittance, as he had not a shilling in his pocket. "I've left," says Tommy, giving himself the airs of a gentleman, "some friends in the gardens. I'm with his Excellency the Bavarian henvy."

"Then you had better go away with him," said the gate people.

"But I tell you I left him there, in the grand circle, with a lady; and, what's more, in the dark walk, I have left a silver-hilted sword."

"Oh, my lord, I'll go and tell him then," cried one of the porters, "if you will wait."

Mr. Billings seated himself on a post near the gate, and there consented to remain until the return of his messenger. The latter went straight to the dark walk, and found the sword, sure enough. But, instead of returning it to its owner, this discourteous knight broke the trenchant blade at the hilt; and flinging the steel away, pocketed the baser silver metal, and lurked off by the private door consecrated to the waiters and fiddlers.

In the meantime, Mr. Billings waited and waited. And what was the conversation of his worthy parents inside the garden? I cannot say; but one of the waiters declared that he had served the great foreign Count with two bowls of rack-punch, and some biscuits, in No. 3: that in the box with him were first a young gentleman, who went away, and a lady, splendidly dressed and masked: that when the lady and his lordship were alone, she edged away to the further end of the table, and they had much talk: that at last, when his Grace had pressed her very much, she took off her mask and said, "Don't you know me now, Max?" that he cried out, "My own Catherine, thou art more beautiful than ever!" and wanted to kneel down and vow eternal love to her; but she begged him not to do so in a place where all the world would see: that then his Highness paid, and they left the gardens, the lady putting on her mask again.

When they issued from the gardens, "Ho! Joseph La Rose, my

coach!" shouted his Excellency, in rather a husky voice; and the men who had been waiting came up with the carriage. A young gentleman, who was dozing on one of the posts at the entry, woke up suddenly at the blaze of the torches and the noise of the footmen. The Count gave his arm to the lady in the mask, who slipped in; and he was whispering La Rose, when the lad who had been sleeping hit his Excellency on the shoulder, and said, "I say, Count, you can give *me* a cast home too," and jumped into the coach.

When Catherine saw her son, she threw herself into his arms, and kissed him with a burst of hysterical tears; of which Mr. Billings was at a loss to understand the meaning. The Count joined them, looking not a little disconcerted; and the pair were landed at their own door, where stood Mr. Hayes, in his nightcap, ready to receive them, and astounded at the splendour of the equipage in which his wife returned to him.

CHAPTER XI.

OF SOME DOMESTIC QUARRELS, AND THE CONSEQUENCE THEREOF.

AN ingenious magazine-writer, who lived in the time of Mr. Brock and the Duke of Marlborough, compared the latter gentleman's conduct in battle, when he

> "In peaceful thought the field of death surveyed,
> To fainting squadrons lent the timely aid;
> Inspired repulsed battalions to engage,
> And taught the doubtful battle where to rage"——

Mr. Joseph Addison, I say, compared the Duke of Marlborough to an angel, who is sent by Divine command to chastise a guilty people—

> "And pleased his Master's orders to perform,
> Rides on the whirlwind, and directs the storm."

The first four of these novel lines touch off the Duke's disposition and genius to a tittle. He had a love for such scenes of strife: in the midst of them his spirit rose calm and supreme, soaring (like an angel or not, but anyway the compliment is a very pretty one) on the battle-clouds majestic, and causing to ebb or to flow the mighty tide of war.

But as this famous simile might apply with equal propriety to a bad angel as to a good one, it may in like manner be employed to illustrate small quarrels as well as great—a little family squabble, in which two or three people are engaged, as well as a vast national dispute, argued on each side by the roaring throats of five hundred

angry cannon. The poet means, in fact, that the Duke of Marlborough had an immense genius for mischief.

Our friend Brock, or Wood (whose actions we love to illustrate by the very handsomest similes), possessed this genius in common with his Grace; and was never so happy, or seen to so much advantage, as when he was employed in setting people by the ears. His spirits, usually dull, then rose into the utmost gaiety and good-humour. When the doubtful battle flagged, he by his art would instantly restore it. When, for instance, Tom's repulsed battalions of rhetoric fled from his mamma's fire, a few words of apt sneer or encouragement on Wood's part would bring the fight round again; or when Mr. Hayes's fainting squadrons of abuse broke upon the stubborn squares of Tom's bristling obstinacy, it was Wood's delight to rally the former, and bring him once more to the charge. A great share had this man in making those bad people worse. Many fierce words and bad passions, many falsehoods and knaveries on Tom's part, much bitterness, scorn, and jealousy on the part of Hayes and Catherine, might be attributed to this hoary old tempter, whose joy and occupation it was to raise and direct the domestic storms and whirlwinds of the family of which he was a member. And do not let us be accused of an undue propensity to use sounding words, because we compare three scoundrels in the Tyburn Road to so many armies, and Mr. Wood to a mighty field-marshal. My dear sir, when you have well studied the world—how supremely great the meanest thing in this world is, and how infinitely mean the greatest—I am mistaken if you do not make a strange and proper jumble of the sublime and the ridiculous, the lofty and the low. I have looked at the world, for my part, and come to the conclusion that I know not which is which.

Well, then, on the night when Mrs. Hayes, as recorded by us, had been to the Marylebone Gardens, Mr. Wood had found the sincerest enjoyment in plying her husband with drink; so that, when Catherine arrived at home, Mr. Hayes came forward to meet her in a manner which showed that he was not only surly but drunk. Tom stepped out of the coach first; and Hayes asked him, with an oath, where he had been? The oath Mr. Billings sternly flung back again (with another in its company), and at the same time refused to give his stepfather any sort of answer to his query.

"The old man is drunk, mother," said he to Mrs. Hayes, as he handed that lady out of the coach (before leaving which she had to withdraw her hand rather violently from the grasp of the Count, who was inside). Hayes instantly showed the correctness of his surmise

by slamming the door courageously in Tom's face, when he attempted to enter the house with his mother. And when Mrs. Catherine remonstrated, according to her wont, in a very angry and supercilious tone, Mr. Hayes replied with equal haughtiness, and a regular quarrel ensued.

People were accustomed in those days to use much more simple and expressive terms of language than are now thought polite; and it would be dangerous to give, in this present year 1840, the exact words of reproach which passed between Hayes and his wife in 1726. Mr. Wood sat near, laughing his sides out. Mr. Hayes swore that his wife should not go abroad to tea-gardens in search of vile Popish noblemen; to which Mrs. Hayes replied, that Mr. Hayes was a pitiful, lying, sneaking cur, and that she would go where she pleased. Mr. Hayes rejoined, that if she said much more he would take a stick to her. Mr. Wood whispered, "And serve her right." Mrs. Hayes thereupon swore she had stood his cowardly blows once or twice before, but that if ever he did so again, as sure as she was born, she would stab him. Mr. Wood said, "Curse me, but I like her spirit."

Mr. Hayes took another line of argument, and said, "The neighbours would talk, madam."

"Ay, that they will, no doubt," said Mr. Wood.

"Then let them," said Catherine. "What do we care about the neighbours? Didn't the neighbours talk when you sent Widow Wilkins to gaol? Didn't the neighbours talk when you levied on poor old Thomson? You didn't mind *then*, Mr. Hayes."

"Business, ma'am, is business; and if I did distrain on Thomson, and lock up Wilkins, I think you knew about it as much as I."

"I'faith, I believe you're a pair," said Mr. Wood.

"Pray, sir, keep your tongue to yourself. Your opinion isn't asked anyhow—no, nor your company wanted neither," cried Mrs. Catherine, with proper spirit.

At which remark Mr. Wood only whistled.

"I have asked this here gentleman to pass this evening along with me. We've been drinking together, ma'am."

"That we have," said Mr. Wood, looking at Mrs. Cat with the most perfect good-humour.

"I say, ma'am, that we've been a-drinking together; and when we've been a-drinking together, I say that a man is my friend. Doctor Wood is my friend, madam—the Rev. Doctor Wood. We've passed the evening in company, talking about politics, madam—politics and riddle-iddle-igion. We've not been flaunting in tea-gardens, and ogling the men."

"It's a lie!" shrieked Mrs. Hayes. "I went with Tom—you know I did: the boy wouldn't let me rest till I promised to go."

"Hang him, I hate him," said Mr. Hayes: "he's always in my way."

"He's the only friend I have in the world, and the only being I care a pin for," said Catherine.

"He's an impudent, idle, good-for-nothing scoundrel, and I hope to see him hanged!" shouted Mr. Hayes. "And pray, madam, whose carriage was that as you came home in? I warrant you paid something for the ride—Ha, ha!"

"Another lie!" screamed Cat, and clutched hold of a supper-knife. "Say it again, John Hayes, and by——, I'll do for you."

"Do for me? Hang me," said Mr. Hayes, flourishing a stick, and perfectly pot-valiant, "do you think I care for a bastard and a ——?"

He did not finish the sentence, for the woman ran at him like a savage, knife in hand. He bounded back, flinging his arms about wildly, and struck her with his staff sharply across the forehead. The woman went down instantly. A lucky blow was it for Hayes and her: it saved him from death, perhaps, and her from murder.

All this scene—a very important one of our drama—might have been described at much greater length; but, in truth, the author has a natural horror of dwelling too long upon such hideous spectacles: nor would the reader be much edified by a full and accurate knowledge of what took place. The quarrel, however, though not more violent than many that had previously taken place between Hayes and his wife, was about to cause vast changes in the condition of this unhappy pair.

Hayes was at the first moment of his victory very much alarmed; he feared that he had killed the woman; and Wood started up rather anxiously too, with the same fancy. But she soon began to recover. Water was brought; her head was raised and bound up; and in a short time Mrs. Catherine gave vent to a copious fit of tears, which relieved her somewhat. These did not affect Hayes much—they rather pleased him, for he saw he had got the better; and although Cat fiercely turned upon him when he made some small attempt towards reconciliation, he did not heed her anger, but smiled and winked in a self-satisfied way at Wood. The coward was quite proud of his victory; and finding Catherine asleep, or apparently so, when he followed her to bed, speedily gave himself up to slumber too, and had some pleasant dreams to his portion.

Mr. Wood also went sniggering and happy upstairs to his chamber. The quarrel had been a real treat to him; it excited the old man—tickled him into good-humour; and he promised himself a rare continuation of the fun when Tom should be made acquainted with the circumstances of the dispute. As for his Excellency the Count, the ride from Marylebone Gardens, and a tender squeeze of the hand which Catherine permitted to him on parting, had so inflamed the passions of the nobleman, that after sleeping for nine hours, and taking his chocolate as usual the next morning, he actually delayed to read the newspaper, and kept waiting a toy-shop lady from Cornhill (with the sweetest bargain of mechlin lace), in order to discourse to his chaplain on the charms of Mrs. Hayes.

She, poor thing, never closed her lids, except when she would have had Mr. Hayes imagine that she slumbered; but lay beside him, tossing and tumbling, with hot eyes wide open, and heart thumping, and pulse of a hundred and ten, and heard the heavy hours tolling; and at last the day came peering, haggard, through the window-curtains, and found her still wakeful and wretched.

Mrs. Hayes had never been, as we have seen, especially fond of her lord; but now, as the day made visible to her the sleeping figure and countenance of that gentleman, she looked at him with a contempt and loathing such as she had never felt even in all the years of her wedded life. Mr. Hayes was snoring profoundly: by his bedside, on his ledger, stood a large greasy tin candlestick, containing a lank tallow-candle, turned down in the shaft; and in the lower part, his keys, purse, and tobacco-pipe; his feet were huddled up in his greasy threadbare clothes; his head and half his sallow face muffled up in a red woollen nightcap; his beard was of several days' growth; his mouth was wide open, and he was snoring profoundly: on a more despicable little creature the sun never shone. And to this sordid wretch was Catherine united for ever. What a pretty rascal history might be read in yonder greasy day-book, which never left the miser!—he never read in any other. Of what a treasure were yonder keys and purse the keepers! not a shilling they guarded but was picked from the pocket of necessity, plundered from needy wantonness, or pitilessly squeezed from starvation. "A fool, a miser, and a coward! Why was I bound to this wretch?" thought Catherine: "I, who am high-spirited and beautiful (did not *he* tell me so?); I who, born a beggar, have raised myself to competence, and might have mounted—who knows whither?—if cursed Fortune had not baulked me!"

As Mrs. Cat did not utter these sentiments, but only thought

them, we have a right to clothe her thoughts in the genteelest possible language; and, to the best of our power, have done so. If the reader examines Mrs. Hayes's train of reasoning, he will not, we should think, fail to perceive how ingeniously she managed to fix all the wrong upon her husband, and yet to twist out some consolatory arguments for her own vanity. This perverse argumentation we have all of us, no doubt, employed in our time. How often have we,—we poets, politicians, philosophers, family-men,—found charming excuses for our own rascalities in the monstrous wickedness of the world about us; how loudly have we abused the times and our neighbours! All this devil's logic did Mrs. Catherine, lying wakeful in her bed on the night of the Marylebone fête, exert in gloomy triumph.

It must, however, be confessed, that nothing could be more just than Mrs. Hayes's sense of her husband's scoundrelism and meanness; for if we have not proved these in the course of this history, we have proved nothing. Mrs. Cat had a shrewd, observing mind; and if she wanted for proofs against Hayes, she had but to look before and about her to find them. This amiable pair were lying in a large walnut-bed, with faded silk furniture, which had been taken from under a respectable old invalid widow, who had become security for a prodigal son; the room was hung round with an antique tapestry (representing Rebecca at the Well, Bathsheba Bathing, Judith and Holofernes, and other subjects from Holy Writ), which had been many score times sold for fifty pounds, and bought back by Mr. Hayes for two, in those accommodating bargains which he made with young gentlemen, who received fifty pounds of money and fifty of tapestry in consideration of their hundred-pound bills. Against this tapestry, and just cutting off Holofernes's head, stood an enormous ominous black clock, the spoil of some other usurious transaction. Some chairs, and a dismal old black cabinet, completed the furniture of this apartment: it wanted but a ghost to render its gloom complete.

Mrs. Hayes sat up in the bed sternly regarding her husband. There is, be sure, a strong magnetic influence in wakeful eyes so examining a sleeping person (do not you, as a boy, remember waking of bright summer mornings and finding your mother looking over you? had not the gaze of her tender eyes stolen into your senses long before you woke, and cast over your slumbering spirit a sweet spell of peace, and love, and fresh-springing joy?) Some such influence had Catherine's looks upon her husband: for, as he slept under them, the man began to writhe about uneasily, and to burrow his head in the

pillow, and to utter quick, strange moans and cries, such as have often jarred one's ear while watching at the bed of the feverish sleeper. It was just upon six, and presently the clock began to utter those dismal grinding sounds, which issue from clocks at such periods, and which sound like the death-rattle of the departing hour. Then the bell struck the knell of it; and with this Mr. Hayes awoke, and looked up, and saw Catherine gazing at him.

Their eyes met for an instant, and Catherine turned away, burning red, and looking as if she had been caught in the commission of a crime.

A kind of blank terror seized upon old Hayes's soul: a horrible icy fear, and presentiment of coming evil; and yet the woman had but looked at him. He thought rapidly over the occurrences of the last night, the quarrel, and the end of it. He had often struck her before when angry, and heaped all kinds of bitter words upon her; but, in the morning, she bore no malice, and the previous quarrel was forgotten, or, at least, passed over. Why should the last night's dispute not have the same end? Hayes calculated all this, and tried to smile.

"I hope we're friends, Cat?" said he. "You know I was in liquor last night, and sadly put out by the loss of that fifty pound. They'll ruin me, dear—I know they will."

Mrs. Hayes did not answer.

"I should like to see the country again, dear," said he, in his most wheedling way. "I've a mind, do you know, to call in all our money? It's you who've made every farthing of it, that's sure; and it's a matter of two thousand pound by this time. Suppose we go into Warwickshire, Cat, and buy a farm, and live genteel. Shouldn't you like to live a lady in your own county again? How they'd stare at Birmingham! hey, Cat?"

And with this Mr. Hayes made a motion, as if he would seize his wife's hand, but she flung his back again.

"Coward!" said she, "you want liquor to give you courage, and then you've only heart enough to strike women."

"It was only in self-defence, my dear," said Hayes, whose courage had all gone. "You tried, you know, to—to——"

"To *stab* you, and I wish I had!" said Mrs. Hayes, setting her teeth, and glaring at him like a demon; and so saying she sprung out of bed. There was a great stain of blood on her pillow. "Look at it," said she. "That blood's of your shedding!" and at this Hayes fairly began to weep, so utterly downcast and frightened was the miserable man. The wretch's tears only inspired his wife with a still

greater rage and loathing; she cared not so much for the blow, but she hated the man: the man to whom she was tied for ever—for ever! The bar between her and wealth, happiness, love, rank perhaps. "If I were free," thought Mrs. Hayes (the thought had been sitting at her pillow all night, and whispering ceaselessly into her ear)—"If I were free, Max would marry me; I know he would:—he said so yesterday!"

* * * * *

As if by a kind of intuition, old Wood seemed to read all this woman's thoughts; for he said that day with a sneer, that he would wager she was thinking how much better it would be to be a Count's lady than a poor miser's wife. "And faith," said he, "a Count and a chariot-and-six is better than an old skinflint with a cudgel." And then he asked her if her head was better and supposed that she was used to beating; and cut sundry other jokes, which made the poor wretch's wounds of mind and body feel a thousand times sorer.

Tom, too, was made acquainted with the dispute, and swore his accustomed vengeance against his stepfather. Such feelings, Wood, with a dexterous malice, would never let rest; it was his joy, at first quite a disinterested one, to goad Catherine and to frighten Hayes: though, in truth, that unfortunate creature had no occasion for incitements from without to keep up the dreadful state of terror and depression into which he had fallen.

For, from the morning after the quarrel, the horrible words and looks of Catherine never left Hayes's memory; but a cold fear followed him—a dreadful prescience. He strove to overcome this fate as a coward would—to kneel to it for compassion—to coax and wheedle it into forgiveness. He was slavishly gentle to Catherine, and bore her fierce taunts with mean resignation. He trembled before young Billings, who was now established in the house (his mother said, to protect her against the violence of her husband), and suffered his brutal language and conduct without venturing to resist.

The young man and his mother lorded over the house: Hayes hardly dared to speak in their presence; seldom sat with the family except at meals; but slipped away to his chamber (he slept apart now from his wife) or passed the evening at the public-house, where he was constrained to drink—to spend some of his beloved sixpences for drink!

And, of course, the neighbours began to say, "John Hayes neglects his wife." "He tyrannizes over her, and beats her." "Always at the public-house, leaving an honest woman alone at home!"

The unfortunate wretch did *not* hate his wife. He was used to her —fond of her as much as he could be fond—sighed to be friends with her again—repeatedly would creep, whimpering, to Wood's room, when the latter was alone, and beg him to bring about a reconciliation. They *were* reconciled, as much as ever they could be. The woman looked at him, thought what she might be but for him, and scorned and loathed him with a feeling that almost amounted to insanity. What nights she lay awake, weeping and cursing herself and him! His humility and beseeching looks only made him more despicable and hateful to her.

If Hayes did not hate the mother, however, he hated the boy—hated and feared him dreadfully. He would have poisoned him if he had had the courage; but he dared not: he dared not even look at him as he sat there, the master of the house, in insolent triumph. O God! how the lad's brutal laughter rung in Hayes's ears; and how the stare of his fierce, bold black eyes pursued him! Of a truth, if Mr. Wood loved mischief, as he did, honestly and purely for mischief's sake, he had enough here. There was mean malice, and fierce scorn, and black revenge, and sinful desire, boiling up in the hearts of these wretched people, enough to content Mr. Wood's great master himself.

Hayes's business, as we have said, was nominally that of a carpenter; but since, for the last few years, he had added to it that of a lender of money, the carpenter's trade had been neglected altogether for one so much more profitable. Mrs. Hayes had exerted herself, with much benefit to her husband, in his usurious business. She was a resolute, clear-sighted, keen woman, that did not love money, but loved to be rich and push her way in the world. She would have nothing to do with the trade now, however, and told her husband to manage it himself. She felt that she was separated from him for ever, and could no more be brought to consider her interests as connected with his own.

The man was well fitted for the creeping and niggling of his dastardly trade; and gathered his moneys, and busied himself with his lawyer, and acted as his own book-keeper and clerk, not without satisfaction. His wife's speculations, when they worked in concert, used often to frighten him. He never sent out his capital without a pang, and only because he dared not question her superior judgment and will. He began now to lend no more: he could not let the money out of his sight. His sole pleasure was to creep up into his room, and count and recount it. When Billings came into the house, Hayes had taken a room next to that of Wood. It was a protection to him; for

Wood would often rebuke the lad for using Hayes ill: and both Catherine and Tom treated the old man with deference.

At last—it was after he had collected a good deal of his money—Hayes began to reason with himself, "Why should I stay?—stay to be insulted by that boy, or murdered by him? He is ready for any crime." He determined to fly. He would send Catherine money every year. No—she had the furniture; let her let lodgings—that would support her. He would go, and live away, abroad in some cheap place—away from that boy and his horrible threats. The idea of freedom was agreeable to the poor wretch; and he began to wind up his affairs as quickly as he could.

Hayes would now allow no one to make his bed or enter his room; and Wood could hear him through the panels fidgeting perpetually to and fro, opening and shutting of chests, and clinking of coin. At the least sound he would start up, and would go to Billings's door and listen. Wood used to hear him creeping through the passages, and returning stealthily to his own chamber.

One day the woman and her son had been angrily taunting him in the presence of a neighbour. The neighbour retired soon; and Hayes, who had gone with him to the door, heard, on returning, the voice of Wood in the parlour. The old man laughed in his usual saturnine way, and said, "Have a care, Mrs. Cat; for if Hayes were to die suddenly, by the laws, the neighbours would accuse thee of his death."

Hayes started as if he had been shot. "He too is in the plot," thought he. "They are all leagued against me: they *will* kill me: they are only biding their time." Fear seized him, and he thought of flying that instant and leaving all; and he stole into his room and gathered his money together. But only a half of it was there: in a few weeks all would have come in. He had not the heart to go. But that night Wood heard Hayes pause at *his* door, before he went to listen at Mrs. Catherine's. "What is the man thinking of?" said Wood. "He is gathering his money together. Has he a hoard yonder unknown to us all?"

Wood thought he would watch him. There was a closet between the two rooms: Wood bored a hole in the panel, and peeped through. Hayes had a brace of pistols, and four or five little bags before him on the table. One of these he opened, and placed, one by one, five-and-twenty guineas into it. Such a sum had been due that day—Catherine spoke of it only in the morning; for the debtor's name had by chance been mentioned in the conversation. Hayes commonly

kept but a few guineas in the house. For what was he amassing all these? The next day, Wood asked for change for a twenty-pound bill. Hayes said he had but three guineas. And when asked by Catherine where the money was that was paid the day before, said that it was at the banker's. "The man is going to fly," said Wood; "that is sure: if he does, I know him—he will leave his wife without a shilling."

He watched him for several days regularly: two or three more bags were added to the former number. "They are pretty things, guineas," thought Wood, "and tell no tales, like bank-bills." And he thought over the days when he and Macshane used to ride abroad in search of them.

I don't know what thoughts entered into Mr. Wood's brain; but the next day, after seeing young Billings, to whom he actually made a present of a guinea, that young man, in conversing with his mother, said, "Do you know, mother, that if you were free, and married the Count, I should be a lord? It's the German law, Mr. Wood says; and you know he was in them countries with Marlborough."

"Ay, that he would," said Mr. Wood, "in Germany: but Germany isn't England; and it's no use talking of such things."

"Hush, child," said Mrs. Hayes, quite eagerly: "how can *I* marry the Count? Besides, a'n't I married, and isn't he too great a lord for me?"

"Too great a lord?—not a whit, mother. If it wasn't for Hayes, I might be a lord now. He gave me five guineas only last week; but curse the skinflint who never will part with a shilling."

"It's not so bad as his striking your mother, Tom. I had my stick up, and was ready to fell him t'other night," added Mr. Wood. And herewith he smiled, and looked steadily in Mrs. Catherine's face. She dared not look again; but she felt that the old man knew a secret that she had been trying to hide from herself. Fool! he knew it; and Hayes knew it dimly: and never, never, since that day of the gala, had it left her, sleeping or waking. When Hayes, in his fear, had proposed to sleep away from her, she started with joy: she had been afraid that she might talk in her sleep, and so let slip her horrible confession.

Old Wood knew all her history since the period of the Marylebone fête. He had wormed it out of her, day by day; he had counselled her how to act; warned her not to yield; to procure, at least, a certain provision for her son, and a handsome settlement for herself, if she determined on quitting her husband. The old man looked on

the business in a proper philosophical light, told her bluntly that he saw she was bent upon going off with the Count, and bade her take precautions: else she might be left as she had been before.

Catherine denied all these charges; but she saw the Count daily, notwithstanding, and took all the measures which Wood had recommended to her. They were very prudent ones. Galgenstein grew hourly more in love: never had he felt such a flame; not in the best days of his youth; not for the fairest princess, countess, or actress, from Vienna to Paris.

At length—it was the night after he had seen Hayes counting his money-bags—old Wood spoke to Mrs. Hayes very seriously. "That husband of yours, Cat," said he, "meditates some treason; ay, and fancies we are about such. He listens nightly at your door and at mine: he is going to leave you, be sure on't; and if he leaves you, he leaves you to starve."

"I can be rich elsewhere," said Mrs. Cat.

"What, with Max?"

"Ay, with Max: and why not?" said Mrs. Hayes.

"Why not, fool! Do you recollect Birmingham? Do you think that Galgenstein, who is so tender now because he *hasn't* won you, will be faithful because he *has?* Psha, woman, men are not made so! Don't go to him until you are sure: if you were a widow now, he would marry you; but never leave yourself at his mercy: if you were to leave your husband to go to him, he would desert you in a fortnight!"

She might have been a Countess! she knew she might, but for this cursed barrier between her and her fortune. Wood knew what she was thinking of, and smiled grimly.

"Besides," he continued, "remember Tom. As sure as you leave Hayes without some security from Max, the boy's ruined: he who might be a lord, if his mother had but —— Psha! never mind: that boy will go on the road, as sure as my name's Wood. He's a Turpin cock in his eye, my dear,—a regular Tyburn look. He knows too many of that sort already; and is too fond of a bottle and a girl to resist and be honest when it comes to the pinch."

"It's all true," said Mrs. Hayes. "Tom's a high mettlesome fellow, and would no more mind a ride on Hounslow Heath than he does a walk now in the Mall."

"Do you want him hanged, my dear?" said Wood.

"Ah, Doctor!"

"It *is* a pity, and that's sure," concluded Mr. Wood, knocking the

ashes out of his pipe, and closing this interesting conversation. "It is a pity that that old skinflint should be in the way of both your fortunes; and he about to fling you over, too!"

Mrs. Catherine retired musing, as Mr. Billings had previously done; a sweet smile of contentment lighted up the venerable features of Doctor Wood, and he walked abroad into the streets as happy a fellow as any in London.

CHAPTER XII.

TREATS OF LOVE, AND PREPARES FOR DEATH.

AND to begin this chapter, we cannot do better than quote a part of a letter from M. l'Abbé O'Flaherty to Madame la Comtesse de X—— at Paris:—

"MADAM, — The little Arouet de Voltaire, who hath come 'hither to take a turn in England,' as I see by the Post of this morning, hath brought me a charming pacquet from your ladyship's hands, which ought to render a reasonable man happy; but, alas! makes your slave miserable. I think of dear Paris (and something more dear than all Paris, of which, Madam, I may not venture to speak further)—I think of dear Paris, and find myself in this dismal *Vitehall*, where, when the fog clears up, I can catch a glimpse of muddy Thames, and of that fatal palace which the kings of England have been obliged to exchange for your noble castle of Saint Germains, that stands so stately by silver Seine. Truly, no bad bargain. For my part, I would give my grand ambassadorial saloons, hangings, gildings, feasts, valets, ambassadors and all, for a *bicoque* in sight of the Thuilleries' towers, or my little cell in the Irlandois.

"My last sheets have given you a pretty notion of our ambassador's public doings; now for a pretty piece of private scandal respecting that great man. Figure to yourself, Madam, his Excellency is in

love; actually in love, talking day and night about a certain fair one whom he hath picked out of a gutter; who is well nigh forty years old; who was his mistress when he was in England a captain of dragoons, some sixty, seventy, or a hundred years since; who hath had a son by him, moreover, a sprightly lad, apprentice to a tailor of eminence that has the honour of making his Excellency's breeches.

"Since one fatal night when he met this fair creature at a certain place of publique resort, called Marylebone Gardens, our Cyrus hath been an altered creature. Love hath mastered this brainless ambassador, and his antics afford me food for perpetual mirth. He sits now opposite to me at a table inditing a letter to his Catherine, and copying it from—what do you think?—from the 'Grand Cyrus.' '*I swear, madam, that my happiness would be to offer you this hand, as I have my heart long ago, and I beg you to bear in mind this declaration.*' I have just dictated to him the above tender words; for our envoy, I need not tell you, is not strong at writing or thinking.

"The fair Catherine, I must tell you, is no less than a carpenter's wife, a well-to-do bourgeois, living at the Tyburn, or Gallows Road. She found out her ancient lover very soon after our arrival, and hath a marvellous hankering to be a Count's lady. A pretty little creature is this Madam Catherine. Billets, breakfasts, pretty walks, presents of silks and satins, pass daily between the pair; but, strange to say, the lady is as virtuous as Diana, and hath resisted all my Count's cajoleries hitherto. The poor fellow told me, with tears in his eyes, that he believed he should have carried her by storm on the very first night of their meeting, but that her son stepped into the way; and he or somebody else hath been in the way ever since. Madam will never appear alone. I believe it is this wondrous chastity of the lady that has elicited this wondrous constancy of the gentleman. She is holding out for a settlement; who knows if not for a marriage? Her husband, she says, is ailing; her lover is fool enough, and she herself conducts her negotiations, as I must honestly own, with a pretty notion of diplomacy."

* * * * *

This is the only part of the reverend gentleman's letter that directly affects this history. The rest contains some scandal concerning greater personages about the court, a great share of abuse of the Elector of Hanover, and a pretty description of a boxing-match at Mr. Figg's ampitheatre in Oxford Road, where John Wells, of Edmund Bury (as by the papers may be seen), master of the noble

science of self-defence, did engage with Edward Sutton, of Gravesend, master of the said science; and the issue of the combat.

"N.B."—adds the Father, in a postscript—"Monsieur Figue gives a hat to be cudgelled for before the Master mount; and the whole of this fashionable information hath been given me by Monseigneur's son, Monsieur Billings, *garçon-tailleur*, Chevalier de Galgenstein."

Mr. Billings was, in fact, a frequent visitor at the Ambassador's house; to whose presence he, by a general order, was always admitted. As for the connection between Mrs. Catherine and her former admirer, the Abbé's history of it is perfectly correct; nor can it be said that this wretched woman, whose tale now begins to wear a darker hue, was, in anything but *soul*, faithless to her husband. But she hated him, longed to leave him, and loved another: the end was coming quickly, and every one of our unknowing actors and actresses were to be implicated, more or less, in the catastrophe.

It will be seen that Mrs. Cat had followed pretty closely the injunctions of Mr. Wood in regard to her dealings with the Count; who grew more heart-stricken and tender daily, as the completion of his wishes was delayed, and his desires goaded by contradiction. The Abbé has quoted one portion of a letter written by him; here is the entire performance, extracted, as the holy father said, chiefly from the romance of the "Grand Cyrus:"—

"*Unhappy* MAXIMILIAN *unto unjust* CATHERINA.

"MADAM,—It must needs be that I love you better than any ever did, since, notwithstanding your injustice in calling me perfidious, I love you no less than I did before. On the contrary, my passion is so violent, and your unjust accusation makes me so sensible of it, that if you did but know the resentments of my soule, you would confess your selfe the most cruell and unjust woman in the world. You shall, ere long, Madam, see me at your feete; and as you were my first passion, so you will be my last.

"On my knees I will tell you, at the first handsom opportunity, that the grandure of my passion can only be equalled by your beauty; it hath driven me to such a fatall necessity, as that I cannot hide the misery which you have caused. Sure, the hostil goddes have, to plague me, ordayned that fatal marridge, by which you are bound to one so infinitly below you in degree. Were that bond of ill-omind Hymen cut in twayn witch binds you, I swear, Madam, that my happiniss woulde be to offer you this hande, as I have my harte long

agoe. And I praye you to beare in minde this declaraçion, which I here sign with my hande, and witch I pray you may one day be called upon to prove the truth on. Beleave me, Madam, that there is none in the world who doth more honor to your vertue than myselfe, nor who wishes your happinesse with more zeal than—MAXIMILIAN.

"From my lodgings in Whitehall, this 25th of February.

"*To the incomparable Catherina, these, with a scarlet satten petticoat.*"

The Count had debated about the sentence promising marriage in event of Hayes's death; but the honest Abbé cut these scruples very short, by saying, justly, that, because he wrote in that manner, there was no need for him to act so; that he had better not sign and address the note in full; and that he presumed his Excellency was not quite so timid as to fancy that the woman would follow him all the way to Germany, when his diplomatic duties would be ended; as they would soon.

The receipt of this billet caused such a flush of joy and exultation to unhappy happy Mrs. Catherine, that Wood did not fail to remark it, and speedily learned the contents of the letter. Wood had no need to bid the poor wretch guard it very carefully: it never from that day forth left her; it was her title of nobility,—her pass to rank, wealth, happiness. She began to look down on her neighbours; her manner to her husband grew more than ordinarily scornful; the poor, vain wretch longed to tell her secret, and to take her place openly in the world. She a Countess, and Tom a Count's son! She felt that she should royally become the title!

About this time—and Hayes was very much frightened at the prevalence of the rumour—it suddenly began to be bruited about in his quarter that he was going to quit the country. The story was in everybody's mouth; people used to sneer, when he turned pale, and wept, and passionately denied it. It was said, too, that Mrs. Hayes was not his wife, but his mistress—everybody had this story,—his mistress, whom he treated most cruelly, and was about to desert. The tale of the blow which had felled her to the ground was known in all quarters. When he declared that the woman tried to stab him, nobody believed him: the women said he would have been served right if she had done so. How had these stories gone abroad? "Three days more, and I *will* fly," thought Hayes; "and the world may say what it pleases."

Ay, fool, fly—away so swiftly that Fate cannot overtake thee: hide so cunningly that Death shall not find thy place of refuge!

CHAPTER XIII.

BEING A PREPARATION FOR THE END.

THE reader, doubtless, doth now partly understand what dark acts of conspiracy are beginning to gather around Mr. Hayes; and possibly hath comprehended—

1. That if the rumour was universally credited which declared that Mrs. Catherine was only Hayes's mistress, and not his wife,

She might, if she so inclined, marry another person; and thereby not injure her fame and excite wonderment, but actually add to her reputation.

2. That if all the world did steadfastly believe that Mr. Hayes intended to desert this woman, after having cruelly maltreated her,

The direction which his journey might take would be of no consequence; and he might go to Highgate, to Edinburgh, to Constantinople, nay, down a well, and no soul would care to ask whither he had gone.

These points Mr. Hayes had not considered duly. The latter case had been put to him, and annoyed him, as we have seen; the former had actually been pressed upon him by Mrs. Hayes herself; who, in almost the only communication she had had with him since their last quarrel, had asked him, angrily, in the presence of Wood and her son,

whether he had dared to utter such lies, and how it came to pass that the neighbours looked scornfully at her, and avoided her?

To this charge Mr. Hayes pleaded, very meekly, that he was not guilty; and young Billings, taking him by the collar, and clinching his fist in his face, swore a dreadful oath that he would have the life of him, if he dared abuse his mother. Mrs. Hayes then spoke of the general report abroad, that he was going to desert her; which, if he attempted to do, Mr. Billings vowed that he would follow him to Jerusalem, and have his blood. These threats, and the insolent language of young Billings, rather calmed Hayes than agitated him: he longed to be on his journey; but he began to hope that no obstacle would be placed in the way of it. For the first time since many days, he began to enjoy a feeling something akin to security, and could look with tolerable confidence towards a comfortable completion of his own schemes of treason.

These points being duly settled, we are now arrived, O public, at a point for which the author's soul hath been yearning ever since this history commenced. We are now come, O critic, to a stage of the work when this tale begins to assume an appearance so interestingly horrific, that you must have a heart of stone if you are not interested by it. O candid and discerning reader, who art sick of the hideous scenes of brutal bloodshed which have of late come forth from pens of certain eminent wits,* if you turn away disgusted from the book, remember that this passage hath not been written for you, or such as you, who have taste to know and hate the style in which it hath been composed; but for the public, which hath no such taste:—for the public, which can patronize four different representations of Jack Sheppard,—for the public, whom its literary providers have gorged with blood and foul Newgate garbage,—and to whom we poor creatures, humbly following at the tail of our great high-priests and prophets of the press, may, as in duty bound, offer some small gift of our own: a little mite truly, but given with good will. Come up, then, fair Catherine, and brave Count;—appear gallant Brock, and faultless Billings;—hasten hither, honest John Hayes: the former chapters are but flowers in which we have been decking you for the sacrifice. Ascend to the altar, ye innocent lambs, and prepare for the final act: lo! the knife is sharpened, and the sacrificer ready! Stretch your throats, sweet ones,—for the public is thirsty, and must have blood!

* This was written in 1840.

CHAPTER THE LAST.

THAT Mr. Hayes had some notion of the attachment of Monsieur de Galgenstein for his wife is very certain : the man could not but perceive that she was more gaily dressed, and more frequently absent than usual ; and must have been quite aware that from the day of the quarrel until the present period, Catherine had never asked him for a shilling for the house expenses. He had not the heart to offer, however ; nor, in truth, did she seem to remember that money was due. She received, in fact, many sums from the tender Count. Tom was likewise liberally provided by the same personage ; who was, moreover, continually sending presents of various kinds to the person on whom his affections were centred.

One of these gifts was a hamper of choice mountain-wine, which had been some weeks in the house, and excited the longing of Mr. Hayes ; who loved wine very much. This liquor was generally drank by Wood and Billings, who applauded it greatly ; and many times, in passing through the back-parlour, which he had to traverse in order to reach the stair, Hayes had cast a tender eye towards the drink ; of which, had he dared, he would have partaken.

On the 1st of March, in the year 1726, Mr. Hayes had gathered together almost the whole sum with which he intended to decamp ; and having on that very day recovered the amount of a bill which he

thought almost hopeless, he returned home in tolerable good-humour; and feeling, so near was his period of departure, something like security. Nobody had attempted the least violence on him: besides, he was armed with pistols, had his money in bills in a belt about his person, and really reasoned with himself that there was no danger for him to apprehend.

He entered the house about dusk, at five o'clock. Mrs. Hayes was absent with Mr. Billings; only Mr. Wood was smoking, according to his wont, in the little back-parlour; and as Mr. Hayes passed, the old gentleman addressed him in a friendly voice, and, wondering that he had been such a stranger, invited him to sit and take a glass of wine. There was a light and a foreman in the shop; Mr. Hayes gave his injunctions to that person, and saw no objection to Mr. Wood's invitation.

The conversation, at first a little stiff between the two gentlemen, began speedily to grow more easy and confidential: and so particularly bland and good-humoured was Mr. or Doctor Wood, that his companion was quite caught, and softened by the charm of his manner; and the pair became as good friends as in the former days of their intercourse.

"I wish you would come down sometimes of evenings," quoth Doctor Wood; "for, though no book-learned man, Mr. Hayes, look you, you are a man of the world, and I can't abide the society of boys. There's Tom, now, since this tiff with Mrs. Cat, the scoundrel plays the Grand Turk here! The pair of 'em, betwixt them, have completely gotten the upper hand of you. Confess that you are beaten, Master Hayes, and don't like the boy?"

"No more I do," said Hayes; "and that's the truth on't. A man doth not like to have his wife's sins flung in his face, nor to be perpetually bullied in his own house by such a fiery sprig as that."

"Mischief, sir,—mischief only," said Wood: "'tis the fun of youth, sir, and will go off as age comes to the lad. Bad as you may think him—and he is as skittish and fierce, sure enough, as a young colt—there is good stuff in him; and though he hath, or fancies he hath, the right to abuse every one, by the Lord he will let none others do so! Last week, now, didn't he tell Mrs. Cat that you served her right in the last beating matter? and weren't they coming to knives, just as in your case? By my faith, they were. Ay, and at the 'Braund's Head,' when some fellow said that you were a bloody Bluebeard, and would murder your wife, stab me if Tom wasn't up in an instant and knocked the fellow down for abusing of you!"

The first of these stories was quite true; the second was only a charitable invention of Mr. Wood, and employed, doubtless, for the amiable purpose of bringing the old and young men together. The scheme partially succeeded; for, though Hayes was not so far mollified towards Tom as to entertain any affection for a young man whom he had cordially detested ever since he knew him, yet he felt more at ease and cheerful regarding himself: and surely not without reason. While indulging in these benevolent sentiments, Mrs. Catherine and her son arrived, and found, somewhat to their astonishment, Mr. Hayes seated in the back-parlour, as in former times; and they were invited by Mr. Wood to sit down and drink.

We have said that certain bottles of mountain-wine were presented by the Count to Mrs. Catherine: these were, at Mr. Wood's suggestion, produced; and Hayes, who had long been coveting them, was charmed to have an opportunity to drink his fill. He forthwith began bragging of his great powers as a drinker, and vowed that he could manage eight bottles without becoming intoxicated.

Mr. Wood grinned strangely, and looked in a peculiar way at Tom Billings, who grinned too. Mrs. Cat's eyes were turned towards the ground; but her face was deadly pale.

The party began drinking. Hayes kept up his reputation as a toper, and swallowed one, two, three bottles without wincing. He grew talkative and merry, and began to sing songs and to cut jokes; at which Wood laughed hugely, and Billings after him. Mrs. Cat could not laugh; but sat silent. What ailed her? Was she thinking of the Count? She had been with Max that day, and had promised him, for the next night at ten, an interview near his lodgings at Whitehall. It was the first time that she would see him alone. They were to meet (not a very cheerful place for a love-tryst) at St. Margaret's churchyard, near Westminster Abbey. Of this, no doubt, Cat was thinking; but what could she mean by whispering to Wood, "No, no! for God's sake, not to-night!"

"She means we are to have no more liquor," said Wood to Mr. Hayes; who heard this sentence, and seemed rather alarmed.

"That's it,—no more liquor," said Catherine, eagerly; "you have had enough to-night. Go to bed, and lock your door, and sleep, Mr. Hayes."

"But I say I've *not* had enough drink!" screamed Hayes; "I'm good for five bottles more, and wager I will drink them too."

"Done, for a guinea!" said Wood.

"Done, and done!" said Billings.

"Be *you* quiet!" growled Hayes, scowling at the lad. "I will drink what I please, and ask no counsel of yours." And he muttered some more curses against young Billings, which showed what his feelings were towards his wife's son; and which the latter, for a wonder, only received with a scornful smile, and a knowing look at Wood.

Well! the five extra bottles were brought, and drank by Mr. Hayes; and seasoned by many songs from the *recueil* of Mr. Thomas D'Urfey and others. The chief part of the talk and merriment was on Hayes's part; as, indeed, was natural,—for, while he drank bottle after bottle of wine, the other two gentlemen confined themselves to small beer,—both pleading illness as an excuse for their sobriety.

And now might we depict, with much accuracy, the course of Mr. Hayes's intoxication, as it rose from the merriment of the three-bottle point to the madness of the four—from the uproarious quarrelsomeness of the sixth bottle to the sickly stupidity of the seventh; but we are desirous of bringing this tale to a conclusion, and must pretermit all consideration of a subject so curious, so instructive, and so delightful. Suffice it to say, as a matter of history, that Mr. Hayes did actually drink seven bottles of mountain-wine; and that Mr. Thomas Billings went to the "Braund's Head," in Bond Street, and purchased another, which Hayes likewise drank.

"That'll do," said Mr. Wood to young Billings; and they led Hayes up to bed, whither, in truth, he was unable to walk himself.

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Mrs. Springatt, the lodger, came down to ask what the noise was. "'Tis only Tom Billings making merry with some friends from the country," answered Mrs. Hayes; whereupon Springatt retired, and the house was quiet.

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Some scuffling and stamping was heard about eleven o'clock.

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After they had seen Mr. Hayes to bed, Billings remembered that he had a parcel to carry to some person in the neighbourhood of the Strand; and, as the night was remarkably fine, he and Mr. Wood agreed to walk together, and set forth accordingly.

[Here follows a description of the THAMES AT MIDNIGHT, in a fine historical style; with an account of Lambeth, Westminster, the Savoy, Baynard's Castle, Arundel House, the Temple; of Old London Bridge, with its twenty arches, "on which be houses builded, so that it seemeth rather a continuall street than a bridge;" of Bankside, and the "Globe" and the "Fortune" Theatres; of the ferries across the river, and of the pirates who infest the same,—namely, tinklermen, petermen, hebbermen, trawlermen; of the fleet of barges that lay at the Savoy steps; and of the long lines of slim wherries sleeping on the river-banks and basking and shining in the moon-beams. A combat on the river is described, that takes place between the crews of a tinklerman's boat and the water-bailiff's. Shouting his war-cry, "St. Mary Overy *à la rescousse!*" the water-bailiff sprung at the throat of the tinklerman captain. The crews of both vessels, as if aware that the struggle of their chiefs would decide the contest, ceased hostilities, and awaited on their respective poops the issue of the death-shock. It was not long coming. "Yield, dog!" said the water-bailiff. The tinklerman could not answer,—for his throat was grasped too tight in the iron clench of the city champion; but drawing his snickersnee, he plunged it seven times in the bailiff's chest: still the latter fell not. The death-rattle gurgled in the throat of his opponent; his arms fell heavily to his side. Foot to foot, each standing at the side of his boat, stood the two brave men,—*they were both dead!* "In the name of St. Clement Danes," said the master, "give way, my men!" and, thrusting forward his halberd (seven feet long, richly decorated with velvet and brass nails, and having the city arms, argent, a cross gules, and in the first quarter a dagger displayed of the second), he thrust the tinklerman's boat away from his own; and at once the bodies of the captains plunged down, down, down, down in the unfathomable waters.

After this follows another episode. Two masked ladies quarrel at the door of a tavern overlooking the Thames: they turn out to be Stella and Vanessa, who have followed Swift thither; who is in the act of reading "Gulliver's Travels" to Gay, Arbuthnot, Bolingbroke, and Pope. Two fellows are sitting shuddering under a doorway; to one of them Tom Billings flung a sixpence. He little knew that the names of those two young men were—*Samuel Johnson* and *Richard Savage.*]

ANOTHER LAST CHAPTER.

MR. HAYES did not join the family the next day; and it appears that the previous night's reconciliation was not very durable; for when Mrs. Springatt asked Wood for Hayes, Mr. Wood stated that Hayes had gone away without saying whither he was bound, or how long he might be absent. He only said, in rather a sulky tone, that he should probably pass the night at a friend's house. "For my part, I know of no friend he hath," added Mr. Wood; "and pray heaven that he may not think of deserting his poor wife, whom he hath beaten and ill-used so already!" In this prayer Mrs. Springatt joined; and so these two worthy people parted.

What business Billings was about cannot be said; but he was this night bound towards Marylebone Fields, as he was the night before for the Strand and Westminster; and, although the night was very stormy and rainy, as the previous evening had been fine, old Wood good-naturedly resolved upon accompanying him; and forth they sallied together.

Mrs. Catherine, too, had *her* business, as we have seen; but this was of a very delicate nature. At nine o'clock, she had an appointment with the Count; and faithfully, by that hour, had found her way to Saint Margaret's churchyard, near Westminster Abbey, where she awaited Monsieur de Galgenstein.

The spot was convenient, being very lonely, and at the same time close to the Count's lodgings at Whitehall. His Excellency came, but somewhat after the hour; for, to say the truth, being a freethinker, he had the most firm belief in ghosts and demons, and did not care to pace a churchyard alone. He was comforted, therefore, when he saw a woman muffled in a cloak, who held out her hand to him at the gate, and said, "Is that you?" He took her hand,—it was very clammy and cold; and at her desire he bade his confidential footman, who had attended him with a torch, to retire, and leave him to himself.

The torch-bearer retired, and left them quite in darkness; and the pair entered the little cemetery, cautiously threading their way among the tombs. They sat down on one, underneath a tree it seemed to be; the wind was very cold, and its piteous howling was the only noise that broke the silence of the place. Catherine's teeth were chattering, for all her wraps; and when Max drew her close to him, and encircled her waist with one arm, and pressed her hand, she did not repulse him, but rather came close to him, and with her own damp fingers feebly returned his pressure.

The poor thing was very wretched and weeping. She confided to Max the cause of her grief. She was alone in the world,—alone and penniless. Her husband had left her; she had that very day received a letter from him which confirmed all that she had suspected so long. He had left her, carried away all his property, and would not return!

If we say that a selfish joy filled the breast of Monsieur de Galgenstein, the reader will not be astonished. A heartless libertine, he felt glad at the prospect of Catherine's ruin; for he hoped that necessity would make her his own. He clasped the poor thing to his heart, and vowed that he would replace the husband she had lost, and that his fortune should be hers.

"Will you replace him?" said she.

"Yes, truly, in everything but the name, dear Catherine; and when he dies, I swear you shall be Countess of Galgenstein."

"Will you swear?" she cried, eagerly.

"By everything that is most sacred: were you free now, I would" (and here he swore a terrific oath) "at once make you mine."

We have seen before that it cost Monsieur de Galgenstein nothing to make these vows. Hayes was likely, too, to live as long as Catherine—as long, at least, as the Count's connection with her; but he was caught in his own snare.

She took his hand and kissed it repeatedly, and bathed it in her tears, and pressed it to her bosom. "Max," she said, "*I am free!* Be mine, and I will love you as I have done for years and years."

Max started back. "What, is he dead?" he said.

"No, no, not dead: but he never was my husband."

He let go her hand, and, interrupting her, said sharply, "Indeed, madam, if this carpenter never was your husband, I see no cause why *I* should be. If a lady, who hath been for twenty years the mistress of a miserable country boor, cannot find it in her heart to put up with the protection of a nobleman—a sovereign's representative—she may seek a husband elsewhere!"

"I was no man's mistress except yours," sobbed Catherine, wringing her hands and sobbing wildly; "but, O heaven! I deserved this. Because I was a child, and you saw, and ruined, and left me—because, in my sorrow and repentance, I wished to repair my crime, and was touched by that man's love, and married him—because he too deceives and leaves me—because, after loving you—madly loving you for twenty years—I will not now forfeit your respect, and degrade myself by yielding to your will, you too must scorn me! It is too much—too much—O heaven!" And the wretched woman fell back almost fainting.

Max was almost frightened by this burst of sorrow on her part, and was coming forward to support her; but she motioned him away, and, taking from her bosom a letter, said, "If it were light, you could see, Max, how cruelly I have been betrayed by that man who called himself my husband. Long before he married me, he was married to another. This woman is still living, he says; and he says he leaves me for ever."

At this moment the moon, which had been hidden behind Westminster Abbey, rose above the vast black mass of that edifice, and poured a flood of silver light upon the little church of St. Margaret's, and the spot where the lovers stood. Max was at a little distance from Catherine, pacing gloomily up and down the flags. She remained at her old position at the tombstone under the tree, or pillar, as it seemed to be, as the moon got up. She was leaning against the pillar, and holding out to Max, with an arm beautifully white and rounded, the letter she had received from her husband: "Read it, Max," she said: "I asked for light, and here is heaven's own, by which you may read."

But Max did not come forward to receive it. On a sudden his face assumed a look of the most dreadful surprise and agony. He

stood still and stared with wild eyes starting from their sockets; he stared upwards, at a point seemingly above Catherine's head. At last he raised up his finger slowly, and said, "Look, Cat—*the head—the head!*" Then uttering a horrible laugh, he fell down grovelling among the stones, gibbering and writhing in a fit of epilepsy.

Catherine started forward and looked up. She had been standing against a post, not a tree—the moon was shining full on it now; and on the summit, strangely distinct, and smiling ghastly, was a livid human head.

The wretched woman fled—she dared look no more. And some hours afterwards, when, alarmed by the Count's continued absence, his confidential servant came back to seek for him in the churchyard, he was found sitting on the flags, staring full at the head, and laughing, and talking to it wildly, and nodding at it. He was taken up a hopeless idiot, and so lived for years and years; clanking the chain, and moaning under the lash, and howling through long nights when the moon peered through the bars of his solitary cell, and he buried his face in the straw.

There—the murder is out! And having indulged himself in a chapter of the very finest writing, the author begs the attention of the British public towards it; humbly conceiving that it possesses some of those peculiar merits which have rendered the fine writing in other chapters of the works of other authors so famous.

Without bragging at all, let us just point out the chief claims of the above pleasing piece of composition. In the first place, it is perfectly stilted and unnatural; the dialogue and the sentiments being artfully arranged, so as to be as strong and majestic as possible. Our dear Cat is but a poor, illiterate country wench, who has come from cutting her husband's throat; and yet, see! she talks and looks like a tragedy princess, who is suffering in the most virtuous blank verse. This is the proper end of fiction, and one of the greatest triumphs that a novelist can achieve: for to make people sympathize with virtue is a vulgar trick that any common fellow can do; but it is not everybody who can take a scoundrel, and cause us to weep and whimper over him as though he were a very saint. Give a young lady of five years old a skein of silk and a brace of netting-needles, and she will in a short time turn you out a decent silk purse

—anybody can ; but try her with a sow's ear, and see whether she can make a silk purse out of *that*. That is the work for your real great artist ; and pleasant it is to see how many have succeeded in these latter days.

The subject is strictly historical, as any one may see by referring to the *Daily Post* of March 3, 1726, which contains the following paragraph :—

"Yesterday morning, early, a man's head, that by the freshness of it seemed to have been newly cut off from the body, having its own hair on, was found by the river's side, near Millbank, Westminster, and was afterwards exposed to public view in St. Margaret's churchyard, where thousands of people have seen it ; but none could tell who the unhappy person was, much less who committed such a horrid and barbarous action. There are various conjectures relating to the deceased ; but there being nothing certain, we omit them. The head was much hacked and mangled in the cutting off."

The head which caused such an impression upon Monsieur de Galgenstein was, indeed, once on the shoulders of Mr. John Hayes, who lost it under the following circumstances. We have seen how Mr. Hayes was induced to drink. Mr. Hayes having been encouraged in drinking the wine, and growing very merry therewith, he sang and danced about the room ; but his wife, fearing the quantity he had drunk would not have the wished-for effect on him, she sent away for another bottle, of which he drank also. This effectually answered their expectations ; and Mr. Hayes became thereby intoxicated, and deprived of his understanding.

He, however, made shift to get into the other room, and, throwing himself upon the bed, fell asleep ; upon which Mrs. Hayes reminded them of the affair in hand, and told them that was the most proper juncture to finish the business.*

* * * * *

Ring, ding, ding ! the gloomy green curtain drops, the *dramatis*

* The description of the murder and the execution of the culprits, which here follows in the original, was taken from the newspapers of the day. Coming from such a source they have, as may be imagined, no literary merit whatever. The details of the crime are simply horrible, without one touch of even that sort of romance which sometimes gives a little dignity to murder. As such they precisely suited Mr. Thackeray's purpose at the time—which was to show the real manners and customs of the Sheppards and Turpins who were then the popular heroes of fiction. But now-a-days there is no such purpose to serve, and therefore these too literal details are omitted.

personæ are duly disposed of, the nimble candle-snuffers put out the lights, and the audience goeth pondering home. If the critic take the pains to ask why the author, who hath been so diffuse in describing the early and fabulous acts of Mrs. Catherine's existence, should so hurry off the catastrophe where a deal of the very finest writing might have been employed, Solomons replies that the "ordinary" narrative is far more emphatic than any composition of his own could be, with all the rhetorical graces which he might employ. Mr. Aram's trial, as taken by the penny-a-liners of those days, had always interested him more than the lengthened and poetical report which an eminent novelist has given of the same. Mr. Turpin's adventures are more instructive and agreeable to him in the account of the Newgate Plutarch, than in the learned Ainsworth's "Biographical Dictionary." And as he believes that the professional gentlemen who are employed to invest such heroes with the rewards that their great actions merit, will go through the ceremony of the grand cordon with much more accuracy and despatch than can be shown by the most distinguished amateur; in like manner he thinks that the history of such investitures should be written by people directly concerned, and not by admiring persons without, who must be ignorant of many of the secrets of Ketchcraft. We very much doubt if Milton himself could make a description of an execution half so horrible as the simple lines in the *Daily Post* of a hundred and ten years since, that now lies before us—"herrlich wie am ersten Tag,"—as bright and clean as on the day of publication. Think of it! it has been read by Belinda at her toilet, scanned at "Button's" and "Will's," sneered at by wits, talked of in palaces and cottages, by a busy race in wigs, red heels, hoops, patches, and rags of all variety—a busy race that hath long since plunged and vanished in the unfathomable gulf towards which we march so briskly.

Where are they? "Afflavit Deus"—and they are gone! Hark! is not the same wind roaring still that shall sweep us down? and yonder stands the compositor at his types who shall put up a pretty paragraph some day to say how, "*Yesterday*, at his house in Grosvenor Square," or "At Botany Bay, universally regretted," died So-and-So. Into what profound moralities is the paragraph concerning Mrs. Catherine's burning leading us!

Ay, truly, and to that very point have we wished to come; for, having finished our delectable meal, it behoves us to say a word or two by way of grace at its conclusion, and be heartily thankful that it is over. It has been the writer's object carefully to exclude from his

drama (except in two very insignificant instances—mere walking-gentlemen parts,) any characters but those of scoundrels of the very highest degree. That he has not altogether failed in the object he had in view, is evident from some newspaper critiques which he has had the good fortune to see; and which abuse the tale of "Catherine" as one of the dullest, most vulgar, and immoral works extant. It is highly gratifying to the author to find that such opinions are abroad, as they convince him that the taste for Newgate literature is on the wane, and that when the public critic has right down undisguised immorality set before him, the honest creature is shocked at it, as he should be, and can declare his indignation in good round terms of abuse. The characters of the tale *are* immoral, and no doubt of it; but the writer humbly hopes the end is not so. The public was, in our notion, dosed and poisoned by the prevailing style of literary practice, and it was necessary to administer some medicine that would produce a wholesome nausea, and afterwards bring about a more healthy habit.

And thank heaven, this effect *has* been produced in very many instances, and that the "Catherine" cathartic has acted most efficaciously. The author has been pleased at the disgust which his work has excited, and has watched with benevolent carefulness the wry faces that have been made by many of the patients who have swallowed the dose. Solomons remembers, at the establishment in Birchin Lane where he had the honour of receiving his education, there used to be administered to the boys a certain cough-medicine, which was so excessively agreeable that all the lads longed to have colds in order to partake of the remedy. Some of our popular novelists have compounded their drugs in a similar way, and made them so palatable that a public, once healthy and honest, has been well-nigh poisoned by their wares. Solomons defies any one to say the like of himself—that his doses have been as pleasant as champagne, and his pills as sweet as barley-sugar;—it has been his attempt to make vice to appear entirely vicious; and in those instances where he hath occasionally introduced something like virtue, to make the sham as evident as possible, and not allow the meanest capacity a single chance to mistake it.

And what has been the consequence? That wholesome nausea which it has been his good fortune to create wherever he has been allowed to practise in his humble circle.

Has any one thrown away a halfpennyworth of sympathy upon any person mentioned in this history? Surely no. But abler and more famous men than Solomons have taken a different plan; and it

becomes every man in his vocation to cry out against such, and expose their errors as best he may.

Labouring under such ideas, Mr. Isaac Solomons, junior, produced the romance of Mrs. Cat, and confesses himself completely happy to have brought it to a conclusion. His poem may be dull—ay, and probably is. The great Blackmore, the great Dennis, the great Sprat, the great Pomfret, not to mention great men of our own time—have they not also been dull, and had pretty reputations too? Be it granted, Solomons *is* dull; but don't attack his morality; he humbly submits that, in his poem, no man shall mistake virtue for vice, no man shall allow a single sentiment of pity or admiration to enter his bosom for any character of the piece: it being, from beginning to end, a scene of unmixed rascality performed by persons who never deviate into good feeling. And although he doth not pretend to equal the great modern authors, whom he hath mentioned, in wit or descriptive power; yet, in the point of moral, he meekly believes that he has been their superior; feeling the greatest disgust for the characters he describes, and using his humble endeavour to cause the public also to hate them.

Horsemonger Lane, January, 1840.

END OF "CATHERINE: A STORY."

MEN'S WIVES

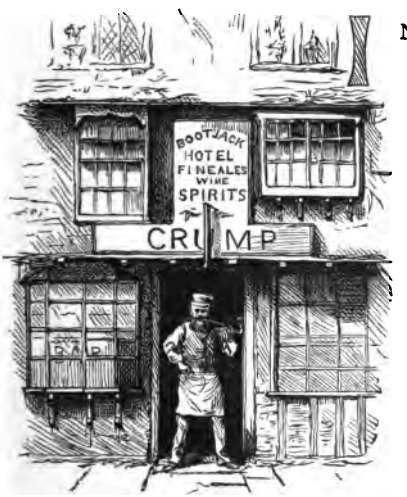
MEN'S WIVES.

By G. Fitz-Boodle.

THE RAVENSWING.

CHAPTER I.

WHICH IS ENTIRELY INTRODUCTORY—CONTAINS AN ACCOUNT OF MISS CRUMP, HER SUITORS, AND HER FAMILY CIRCLE.



In a certain quiet and sequestered nook of the retired village of London—perhaps in the neighbourhood of Berkeley Square, or at any rate somewhere near Burlington Gardens—there was once a house of entertainment called the "Bootjack Hotel." Mr. Crump, the landlord, had, in the outset of life, performed the duties of boots in some inn even more frequented than his own, and, far from being ashamed of his origin, as many persons are in the days of their prosperity, had thus solemnly recorded it over the hospitable gate of his hotel.

Crump married Miss Budge, so well known to the admirers of the festive dance on the other side of the water as Miss Delancy; and

they had one daughter, named Morgiana, after that celebrated part in the "Forty Thieves" which Miss Budge performed with unbounded applause both at the "Surrey" and "The Wells." Mrs. Crump sat in a little bar, profusely ornamented with pictures of the dancers of all ages, from Hillisberg, Rose, Parisot, who plied the light fantastic toe in 1805, down to the Sylphides of our day. There was in the collection a charming portrait of herself, done by De Wilde; she was in the dress of Morgiana, and in the act of pouring, to very slow music, a quantity of boiling oil into one of the forty jars. In this sanctuary she sat, with black eyes, black hair, a purple face and a turban, and morning, noon, or night, as you went into the parlour of the hotel, there was Mrs Crump taking tea (with a little something in it), looking at the fashions, or reading Cumberland's "British Theatre." The *Sunday Times* was her paper, for she voted the *Dispatch*, that journal which is taken in by most ladies of her profession, to be vulgar and Radical, and loved the theatrical gossip in which the other mentioned journal abounds.

The fact is, that the "Royal Bootjack," though a humble, was a very genteel house; and a very little persuasion would induce Mr. Crump, as he looked at his own door in the sun, to tell you that he had himself once drawn off with that very bootjack the top-boots of His Royal Highness the Prince of Wales and the first gentleman in Europe. While, then, the houses of entertainment in the neighbourhood were loud in their pretended liberal politics, the "Bootjack" stuck to the good old Conservative line, and was only frequented by such persons as were of that way of thinking. There were two parlours, much accustomed, one for the gentlemen of the shoulder-knot, who came from the houses of their employers hard by; another for some "gents who used the 'ouse," as Mrs. Crump would say (heaven bless her!) in her simple Cockniac dialect, and who formed a little club there.

I forgot to say that while Mrs. C. was sipping her eternal tea or washing up her endless blue china, you might often hear Miss Morgiana employed at the little red-silk cottage piano, singing, "Come where the haspens quiver," or "Bonny lad, march over hill and furrow," or "My art and lute," or any other popular piece of the day. And the dear girl sung with very considerable skill too, for she had a fine loud voice, which if not always in tune, made up for that defect by its great energy and activity; and Morgiana was not content with singing the mere tune, but gave every one of the roulades, flourishes, and ornaments as she heard them at the theatres by Mrs. Humby,

Mrs. Waylett, or Madame Vestris. The girl had a fine black eye like her mamma, a grand enthusiasm for the stage, as every actor's child will have, and, if the truth must be known, had appeared many and many a time at the theatre in Catherine Street, in minor parts first, and then in Little Pickle, in Desdemona, in Rosina, and in Miss Foote's part where she used to dance: I have not the name to my hand, but think it is Davidson. Four times in the week, at least, her mother and she used to sail off at night to some place of public amusement, for Mrs. Crump had a mysterious acquaintance with all sorts of theatrical personages; and the gates of her old haunt "The Wells," of the "Cobourg" (by the kind permission of Mrs. Davidge), nay, of the "Lane" and the "Market" themselves, flew open before her "Open sesame," as the robbers' door did to her colleague, Ali Baba (Hornbuckle), in the operatic piece in which she was so famous.

Beer was Mr. Crump's beverage, diversified by a little gin, in the evenings; and little need be said of this gentleman except that he discharged his duties honourably, and filled the president's chair at the club as completely as it could possibly be filled; for he could not even sit in it in his great-coat, so accurately was the seat adapted to him. His wife and daughter, perhaps, thought somewhat slightingly of him, for he had no literary tastes, and had never been at a theatre since he took his bride from one. He was valet to Lord Slapper at the time, and certain it is that his lordship set him up in the "Bootjack," and that stories *had* been told. But what are such to you or me? Let bygones be bygones; Mrs. Crump was quite as honest as her neighbours, and Miss had 500*l.* to be paid down on the day of her wedding.

Those who know the habits of the British tradesman are aware that he has gregarious propensities like any lord in the land; that he loves a joke, that he is not averse to a glass; that after the day's toil he is happy to consort with men of his degree; and that as society is not so far advanced among us as to allow him to enjoy the comforts of splendid club-houses, which are open to many persons with not a tenth part of his pecuniary means, he meets his friends in the cosy tavern parlour, where a neat sanded floor, a large Windsor chair, and a glass of hot something and water, make him as happy as any of the clubmen in their magnificent saloons.

At the "Bootjack" was, as we have said, a very genteel and select society, called the "Kidney Club," from the fact that on Saturday evenings a little graceful supper of broiled kidneys was usually discussed by the members of the club. Saturday was their

grand night; not but that they met on all other nights in the week when inclined for festivity: and indeed some of them could not come on Saturdays in the summer, having elegant villas in the suburbs, where they passed the six-and-thirty hours of recreation that are happily to be found at the end of every week.

There was Mr. Balls, the great grocer of South Audley Street, a warm man, who, they say, had his 20,000*l.*; Jack Snaffle, of the mews hard by, a capital fellow for a song; Clinker, the ironmonger: all married gentlemen and in the best line of business; Tressle, the undertaker, &c. No liveries were admitted into the room, as may be imagined, but one or two select butlers and major-domos joined the circle; for the persons composing it knew very well how important it was to be on good terms with these gentlemen: and many a time my lord's account would never have been paid, and my lady's large order never have been given, but for the conversation which took place at the "Bootjack," and the friendly intercourse subsisting between all the members of the society.

The tiptop men of the society were two bachelors, and two as fashionable tradesmen as any in the town: Mr. Woolsey, from Stultz's, of the famous house of Linsey, Woolsey and Co. of Conduit Street, Tailors; and Mr. Eglantine, the celebrated perruquier and perfumer of Bond Street, whose soaps, razors, and patent ventilating scalps are known throughout Europe. Linsey, the senior partner of the tailors' firm, had his handsome mansion in Regent's Park, drove his buggy, and did little more than lend his name to the house. Woolsey lived in it, was the working man of the firm, and it was said that his cut was as magnificent as that of any man in the profession. Woolsey and Eglantine were rivals in many ways,—rivals in fashion, rivals in wit, and, above all, rivals for the hand of an amiable young lady whom we have already mentioned, the dark-eyed songstress Morgiana Crump. They were both desperately in love with her, that was the truth; and each, in the absence of the other, abused his rival heartily. Of the hair-dresser Woolsey said, that as for Eglantine being his real name, it was all his (Mr. Woolsey's) eye; that he was in the hands of the Jews, and his stock and grand shop eaten up by usury. And with regard to Woolsey, Eglantine remarked, that his pretence of being descended from the Cardinal was all nonsense; that he was a partner, certainly, in the firm, but had only a sixteenth share; and that the firm could never get their moneys in, and had an immense number of bad debts in their books. As is usual, there was a great deal of truth and a great deal of malice

in these tales; however, the gentlemen were, take them all in all, in a very fashionable way of business, and had their claims to Miss Morgiana's hand backed by the parents. Mr. Crump was a partisan of the tailor; while Mrs. C. was a strong advocate for the claims of the enticing perfumer.

Now, it was a curious fact, that these two gentlemen were each in need of the other's services—Woolsey being afflicted with premature baldness, or some other necessity for a wig still more fatal—Eglantine being a very fat man, who required much art to make his figure at all decent. He wore a brown frock-coat and frogs, and attempted by all sorts of contrivances to hide his obesity; but Woolsey's remark, that, dress as he would, he would always look like a snob, and that there was only one man in England who could make a gentleman of him, went to the perfumer's soul; and if there was one thing on earth he longed for (not including the hand of Miss Crump), it was to have a coat from Linsey's, in which costume he was sure that Morgiana would not resist him.

If Eglantine was uneasy about the coat, on the other hand he attacked Woolsey atrociously on the score of his wig; for though the latter went to the best makers, he never could get a peruke to sit naturally upon him; and the unhappy epithet of Mr. Wiggins, applied to him on one occasion by the barber, stuck to him ever after in the club, and made him writhe when it was uttered. Each man would have quitted the "Kidneys" in disgust long since, but for the other,—for each had an attraction in the place, and dared not leave the field in possession of his rival.

To do Miss Morgiana justice, it must be said, that she did not encourage one more than another; but as far as accepting eau-de-Cologne and hair-combs from the perfumer,—some opera tickets, a treat to Greenwich, and a piece of real Genoa velvet for a bonnet (it had originally been intended for a waistcoat), from the admiring tailor, she had been equally kind to each, and in return had made each a present of a lock of her beautiful glossy hair. It was all she had to give, poor girl! and what could she do but gratify her admirers by this cheap and artless testimony of her regard? A pretty scene and quarrel took place between the rivals on the day when they discovered that each was in possession of one of Morgiana's ringlets.

Such, then, were the owners and inmates of the little "Bootjack," from whom and which, as this chapter is exceedingly discursive and descriptive, we must separate the reader for a while, and carry him—it is only into Bond Street, so no gentleman need be afraid—carry

him into Bond Street, where some other personages are awaiting his consideration.

Not far from Mr. Eglantine's shop in Bond Street, stand, as is very well known, the Windsor chambers. The West Diddlesex Association (Western Branch), the British and Foreign Soap Company, the celebrated attorneys Kite and Levison, have their respective offices here; and as the names of the other inhabitants of the chambers are not only painted on the walls, but also registered in Mr. Boyle's "Court Guide," it is quite unnecessary that they should be repeated here. Among them, on the entresol (between the splendid saloons of the Soap Company on the first floor, with their statue of Britannia presenting a packet of the soap to Europe, Asia, Africa, and America, and the West Diddlesex Western Branch on the basement)—lives a gentleman by the name of Mr. Howard Walker. The brass plate on the door of that gentleman's chambers had the word "Agency" inscribed beneath his name; and we are therefore at liberty to imagine that he followed that mysterious occupation. In person Mr. Walker was very genteel; he had large whiskers, dark eyes (with a slight cast in them), a cane, and a velvet waistcoat. He was a member of a club; had an admission to the opera, and knew every face behind the scenes; and was in the habit of using a number of French phrases in his conversation, having picked up a smattering of that language during a residence "on the Continent;" in fact, he had found it very convenient at various times of his life to dwell in the city of Boulogne, where he acquired a knowledge of smoking, *écarté*, and billiards, which was afterwards of great service to him. He knew all the best tables in town, and the marker at Hunt's could only give him ten. He had some fashionable acquaintances too, and you might see him walking arm-in-arm with such gentlemen as my Lord Vauxhall, the Marquess of Billingsgate, or Captain Buff; and at the same time nodding to young Moses, the dandy bailiff; or Loder, the gambling-house keeper; or Aminadab, the cigar-seller in the Quadrant. Sometimes he wore a pair of moustaches, and was called Captain Walker; grounding his claim to that title upon the fact of having once held a commission in the service of her Majesty the Queen of Portugal. It scarcely need be said that he had been through the Insolvent Court many times. But to those who did not know his history intimately there was some difficulty in identifying him with the individual who had so taken the benefit of the law, inasmuch as in his schedule his name appeared as Hooker Walker, wine-merchant, commission-agent, music-seller, or what not. The fact is, that though he preferred to

call himself Howard, Hooker was his Christian name, and it had been bestowed on him by his worthy old father, who was a clergyman, and had intended his son for that profession. But as the old gentleman died in York gaol, where he was a prisoner for debt, he was never able to put his pious intentions with regard to his son into execution; and the young fellow (as he was wont with many oaths to assert) was thrown on his own resources, and became a man of the world at a very early age.

What Mr. Howard Walker's age was at the time of the commencement of this history, and, indeed, for an indefinite period before or afterwards, it is impossible to determine. If he were eight-and-twenty, as he asserted himself, Time had dealt hardly with him: his hair was thin, there were many crows'-feet about his eyes, and other signs in his countenance of the progress of decay. If, on the contrary, he were forty, as Sam Snaffle declared, who himself had misfortunes in early life, and vowed he knew Mr. Walker in Whitecross Street Prison in 1820, he was a very young-looking person considering his age. His figure was active and slim, his leg neat, and he had not in his whiskers a single white hair.

It must, however, be owned that he used Mr. Eglantine's Regenerative Unction (which will make your whiskers as black as your boot), and, in fact, he was a pretty constant visitor at that gentleman's emporium; dealing with him largely for soaps and articles of perfumery, which he had at an exceedingly low rate. Indeed, he was never known to pay Mr. Eglantine one single shilling for those objects of luxury, and, having them on such moderate terms, was enabled to indulge in them pretty copiously. Thus Mr. Walker was almost as great a nosegay as Mr. Eglantine himself: his handkerchief was scented with verbena, his hair with jessamine, and his coat had usually a fine perfume of cigars, which rendered his presence in a small room almost instantaneously remarkable. I have described Mr. Walker thus accurately, because, in truth, it is more with characters than with astounding events that this little history deals, and Mr. Walker is one of the principal of our *dramatis personæ*.

And so, having introduced Mr. W., we will walk over with him to Mr. Eglantine's emporium, where that gentleman is in waiting, too, to have his likeness taken.

There is about an acre of plate glass under the royal arms on Mr. Eglantine's shop-window; and at night, when the gas is lighted, and the washballs are illuminated, and the lambent flame plays fitfully over numberless bottles of vari-coloured perfumes—now flashes on a case

of razors, and now lightens up a crystal vase, containing a hundred thousand of his patent tooth-brushes—the effect of the sight may be imagined. You don't suppose that he is a creature who has those odious, simpering wax figures in his window, that are called by the vulgar dummies? He is above such a wretched artifice; and it is my belief that he would as soon have his own head chopped off, and placed as a trunkless decoration to his shop-window, as allow a dummy to figure there. On one pane you read in elegant gold letters "Eglantinia"—'tis his essence for the handkerchief; on the other is written "Regenerative Unction"—'tis his invaluable pomatum for the hair.

There is no doubt about it: Eglantine's knowledge of his profession amounts to genius. He sells a cake of soap for seven shillings, for which another man would not get a shilling, and his tooth-brushes go off like wildfire at half-a-guinea a-piece. If he has to administer rouge or pearl-powder to ladies, he does it with a mystery and fascination which there is no resisting, and the ladies believe there are no cosmetics like his. He gives his wares unheard-of names, and obtains for them sums equally prodigious. He *can* dress hair—that is a fact—as few men in this age can; and has been known to take twenty pounds in a single night from as many of the first ladies of England when ringlets were in fashion. The introduction of bands, he says, made a difference of 2,000*l.* a year in his income; and if there is one thing in the world he hates and despises, it is a Madonna. "I'm not," says he, "a tradesman—I'm a *hartist*" (Mr. Eglantine was born in London)—"I'm a hartist; and show me a fine 'ead of air, and I'll dress it for nothink." He vows that it was his way of dressing Mademoiselle Sontag's hair, that caused the count her husband to fall in love with her; and he has a lock of it in a brooch, and says it was the finest head he ever saw, except one, and that was Morgiana Crump's.

With his genius and his position in the profession, how comes it, then, that Mr. Eglantine was not a man of fortune, as many a less clever has been? If the truth must be told, he loved pleasure, and was in the hands of the Jews. He had been in business twenty years: he had borrowed a thousand pounds to purchase his stock and shop; and he calculated that he had paid upwards of twenty thousand pounds for the use of the one thousand, which was still as much due as on the first day when he entered business. He could show that he had received a thousand dozen of champagne from the disinterested money-dealers with whom he usually negotiated his paper. He had pictures all over his "studios," which had been purchased in the same bargains. If he sold his goods at an enormous price, he paid for them at a rate

almost equally exorbitant. There was not an article in his shop but came to him through his Israelite providers; and in the very front shop itself sat a gentleman who was the nominee of one of them, and who was called Mr. Mossrose. He was there to superintend the cash account, and to see that certain instalments were paid to his principals, according to certain agreements entered into between Mr. Eglantine and them.

Having that sort of opinion of Mr. Mossrose which Damocles may have had of the sword which hung over his head, of course Mr. Eglantine hated his foreman profoundly. "*He* an artist," would the former gentleman exclaim; "why, he's only a disguised bailiff! Mossrose indeed! The chap's name's Amos, and he sold oranges before he came here." Mr. Mossrose, on his side, utterly despised Mr. Eglantine, and looked forward to the day when he would become the proprietor of the shop, and take Eglantine for a foreman; and then it would be *his* turn to sneer and bully, and ride the high horse.

Thus it will be seen that there was a skeleton in the great perfumer's house, as the saying is: a worm in his heart's core, and though to all appearance prosperous, he was really in an awkward position.

What Mr. Eglantine's relations were with Mr. Walker may be imagined from the following dialogue which took place between the two gentlemen at five o'clock one summer's afternoon, when Mr. Walker, issuing from his chambers, came across to the perfumer's shop:—

"Is Eglantine at home, Mr. Mossrose?" said Walker to the foreman, who sat in the front shop.

"Don't know—go and look" (meaning go and be hanged); for Mossrose also hated Mr. Walker.

"If you're uncivil I'll break your bones, Mr. *Amos*," says Mr. Walker, sternly.

"I should like to see you try, Mr. *Hooker* Walker," replies the undaunted shopman; on which the Captain, looking several tremendous canings at him, walked into the back room or "studio."

"How are you, Tiny my buck?" says the Captain. "Much doing?"

"Not a soul in town. I 'aven't touched the hirons all day," replied Mr. Eglantine, in rather a desponding way.

"Well, just get them ready now, and give my whiskers a turn. I'm going to dine with Billingsgate and some out-and-out fellows at the 'Regent,' and so, my lad, just do your best."

"I can't," says Mr. Eglantine. "I expect ladies, Captain, every minute."

"Very good; I don't want to trouble such a great man, I'm sure. Good-bye, and let me hear from you *this day week*, Mr. Eglantine." "This day week" meant that at seven days from that time a certain bill accepted by Mr. Eglantine would be due, and presented for payment.

"Don't be in such a hurry, Captain—do sit down. I'll curl you in one minute. And, I say, won't the party renew?"

"Impossible—it's the third renewal."

"But I'll make the thing handsome to you;—indeed I will."

"How much?"

"Will ten pounds do the business?"

"What! offer my principal ten pounds? Are you mad, Eglantine?—A little more of the iron to the left whisker."

"No, I meant for commission."

"Well, I'll see if that will do. The party I deal with, Eglantine, has power, I know, and can defer the matter no doubt. As for me, you know, *I've* nothing to do in the affair, and only act as a friend between you and him. I give you my honour and soul, I do."

"I know you do, my dear sir." The last two speeches were lies. The perfumer knew perfectly well that Mr. Walker would pocket the 10*l.*; but he was too easy to care for paying it, and too timid to quarrel with such a powerful friend. And he had on three different occasions already paid 10*l.* fine for the renewal of the bill in question, all of which bonuses he knew went to his friend Mr. Walker.

Here, too, the reader will perceive what was, in part, the meaning of the word "agency" on Mr. Walker's door. He was a go-between between money-lenders and borrowers in this world, and certain small sums always remained with him in the course of the transaction. He was an agent for wine, too; an agent for places to be had through the influence of great men; he was an agent for half-a-dozen theatrical people, male and female, and had the interests of the latter especially, it was said, at heart. Such were a few of the means by which this worthy gentleman contrived to support himself, and if, as he was fond of high living, gambling, and pleasures of all kinds, his revenue was not large enough for his expenditure—why, he got into debt, and settled his bills that way. He was as much at home in the Fleet as in Pall Mall, and quite as happy in the one place as in the other. "That's the way I take things," would this philosopher say. "If I've money, I spend; if I've credit, I borrow; if I'm dunned, I whitewash;

and so you can't beat me down." Happy elasticity of temperament! I do believe that in spite of his misfortunes and precarious position, there was no man in England whose conscience was more calm, and whose slumbers were more tranquil than those of Captain Howard Walker.

As he was sitting under the hands of Mr. Eglantine, he reverted to "the ladies," whom the latter gentleman professed to expect; said he was a sly dog, a lucky ditto, and asked him if the ladies were handsome.

Eglantine thought there could be no harm in telling a bouncer to a gentleman with whom he was engaged in money transactions; and so, to give the Captain an idea of his solvency and the brilliancy of his future prospects, "Captain," said he, "I've got a hundred and eighty pounds out with you, which you were obliging enough to negotiate for me. Have I, or have I not, two bills out to that amount?"

"Well, my good fellow, you certainly have; and what then?"

"What then? Why, I bet you five pounds to one, that in three months those bills are paid."

"Done! five pounds to one. I take it."

This sudden closing with him made the perfumer rather uneasy; but he was not to pay for three months, and so he said "Done!" too, and went on: "What would you say if your bills were paid?"

"Not mine; Pike's."

"Well, if Pike's were paid; and the Minories' man paid, and every single liability I have cleared off; and that Mossrose flung out of winder, and me and my emporium as free as hair?"

"You don't say so? Is Queen Anne dead? and has she left you a fortune? or what's the luck in the wind now?"

"It's better than Queen Anne, or anybody dying. What should you say to seeing in that very place where Mossrose now sits (hang him!)—seeing the *finest head of 'air now in Europe?* A woman, I tell you—a slap-up lovely woman, who, I'm proud to say, will soon be called Mrs. Heglantine, and will bring me five thousand pounds to her fortune."

"Well, Tiny, this *is* good luck indeed. I say, you'll be able to do a bill or two for *me* then, hay? You won't forget an old friend?"

"That I won't. I shall have a place at my board for you, Capting; and many's the time I shall 'ope to see you under that ma'ogany."

"What will the French milliner say? She'll hang herself for despair, Eglantine."

"Hush! not a word about *'er*. I've sown all my wild oats, I tell you. Eglantine is no longer the gay young bachelor, but the sober married man. I want a heart to share the feelings of mine. I want repose. I'm not so young as I was, I feel it."

"Pooh! pooh! you are—you are ——"

"Well, but I sigh for an 'appy fireside; and I'll have it."

"And give up that club which you belong to, hay?"

"'The Kidneys?' Oh! of course, no married man should belong to such places: at least, *I*'ll not; and I'll have my kidneys broiled at home. But be quiet, Captain, if you please; the ladies appointed to——"

"And is it *the* lady you expect? eh, you rogue!"

"Well, get along. It's her and her Ma."

But Mr. Walker determined he wouldn't get along, and would see these lovely ladies before he stirred.

The operation on Mr. Walker's whiskers being concluded, he was arranging his toilet before the glass in an agreeable attitude: his neck out, his enormous pin settled in his stock to his satisfaction, his eyes complacently directed towards the reflection of his left and favourite whisker. Eglantine was laid on a settee, in an easy, though melancholy posture; he was twiddling the tongs with which he had just operated on Walker with one hand, and his right-hand ringlet with the other, and he was thinking—thinking of Morgiana; and then of the bill which was to become due on the 16th; and then of a light blue velvet waistcoat with gold sprigs, in which he looked very killing, and so was trudging round in his little circle of loves, fears, and vanities. "Hang it!" Mr. Walker was thinking, "I *am* a handsome man. A pair of whiskers like mine are not met with every day. If anybody can see that my tuft is dyed, may I be——" When the door was flung open, and a large lady with a curl on her forehead, yellow shawl, a green-velvet bonnet with feathers, half-boots, and a drab gown with tulips and other large exotics painted on it—when, in a word, Mrs. Crump and her daughter bounced into the room.

"Here we are, Mr. E.," cries Mrs. Crump, in a gay, *folâtre*, confidential air. "But law! there's a gent in the room!"

"Don't mind me, ladies," said the gent alluded to, in his fascinating way. "I'm a friend of Eglantine's; ain't I, Egg? a chip of the old block, hay?"

"*That* you are," said the perfumer, starting up.

"An 'air-dresser?" asked Mrs. Crump. "Well, I thought he

was; there's something, Mr. E., in gentlemen of your profession so exceeding, so uncommon *distangy*."

"Madam, you do me proud," replied the gentleman so complimented, with great presence of mind. "Will you allow me to try my skill upon you, or upon Miss, your lovely daughter? I'm not so clever as Eglantine, but no bad hand, I assure you."

"Nonsense, Captain," interrupted the perfumer, who was uncomfortable somehow at the rencontre between the Captain and the object of his affection. "*He's* not in the profession, Mrs. C. This is my friend Captain Walker, and proud I am to call him my friend." And then aside to Mrs. C., "One of the first swells on town, ma'am—a regular tip-topper."

Humouring the mistake which Mrs. Crump had just made, Mr. Walker thrust the curling-irons into the fire in a minute, and looked round at the ladies with such a fascinating grace, that both, now made acquainted with his quality, blushed and giggled, and were quite pleased. Mamma looked at 'Gina, and 'Gina looked at mamma; and then mamma gave 'Gina a little blow in the region of her little waist, and then both burst out laughing, as ladies will laugh, and as, let us trust, they *may* laugh for ever and ever. Why need there be a reason for laughing? Let us laugh when we are laughy, as we sleep when we are sleepy. And so Mrs. Crump and her demoiselle laughed to their hearts' content; and both fixed their large shining black eyes repeatedly on Mr. Walker.

"I won't leave the room," said he, coming forward with the heated iron in his hand, and smoothing it on the brown paper with all the dexterity of a professor (for the fact is, Mr. W. every morning curled his own immense whiskers with the greatest skill and care)—"I won't leave the room, Eglantine my boy. My lady here took me for a hairdresser, and so, you know, I've a right to stay."

"He can't stay," said Mrs. Crump, all of a sudden, blushing as red as a peony.

"I shall have on my peignoir, mamma," said Miss, looking at the gentleman, and then dropping down her eyes and blushing too.

"But he can't stay, 'Gina, I tell you: do you think that I would, before a gentleman, take off my ——"

"Mamma means her FRONT!" said Miss, jumping up, and beginning to laugh with all her might; at which the honest landlady of the "Bootjack," who loved a joke, although at her own expense, laughed too, and said that no one, except Mr. Crump and Mr. Eglantine, had ever seen her without the ornament in question.

"*Do* go now, you provoking thing, you!" continued Miss C. to Mr. Walker; "I wish to hear the hoverture, and it's six o'clock now, and we shall never be done against then:" but the way in which Morgiana said "*do* go," clearly indicated "don't" to the perspicacious mind of Mr. Walker.

"Perhaps you 'ad better go," continued Mr. Eglantine, joining in this sentiment, and being, in truth, somewhat uneasy at the admiration which his "swell friend" excited.

"I'll see you hanged first, Eggy my boy! Go I won't, until these ladies have had their hair dressed: didn't you yourself tell me that Miss Crump's was the most beautiful hair in Europe? And do you think that I'll go away without seeing it? No, here I stay."

"You naughty, wicked, odious, provoking man!" said Miss Crump. But, at the same time, she took off her bonnet, and placed it on one of the side candlesticks of Mr. Eglantine's glass (it was a black-velvet bonnet, trimmed with sham lace, and with a wreath of nasturtiums, convolvuluses, and wallflowers within); and then said, "Give me the peignoir, Mr. Archibald, if you please;" and Eglantine, who would do anything for her when she called him Archibald, immediately produced that garment, and wrapped round the delicate shoulders of the lady, who removing a sham gold chain which she wore on her forehead, two brass hair-combs set with glass rubies, and the comb which kept her back hair together,—removing them, I say, and turning her great eyes towards the stranger, and giving her head a shake, down let tumble such a flood of shining, waving, heavy, glossy, jetty hair, as would have done Mr. Rowland's heart good to see. It tumbled down Miss Morgiana's back, and it tumbled over her shoulders, it tumbled over the chair on which she sat, and from the midst of it her jolly, bright-eyed, rosy face beamed out with a triumphant smile, which said, "A'n't I now the most angelic being you ever saw?"

"By heaven! it's the most beautiful thing I ever saw!" cried Mr. Walker, with undisguised admiration.

"*Isn't* it?" said Mrs. Crump, who made her daughter's triumph her own. "Heigho! when I acted at 'The Wells' in 1820, before that dear girl was born, *I* had such a head of hair as that, to a shade, sir, to a shade. They called me Ravenswing on account of it. I lost my head of hair when that dear child was born, and I often say to her, 'Morgiana, you came into the world to rob your mother of her 'air.' Were you ever at 'The Wells,' sir, in 1820? Perhaps you recollect Miss Delancy? I am that Miss Delancy. Perhaps you recollect,—

"'Tink-a-tink, tink-a-tink,
By the light of the star,
On the blue river's brink,
I heard a guitar.

"'I heard a guitar,
On the blue waters clear,
And knew by its mu-u-sic,
That Selim was near!'

You remember that in the *Bagdad Bells?* Fatima, Delancy; Selim, Benlomond (his real name was Bunnion: and he failed, poor fellow, in the public line afterwards). It was done to the tambourine, and dancing between each verse,—

"'Tink-a-tink, tink-a-tink,
How the soft music swells,
And I hear the soft clink
Of the minaret bells!

"'Tink-a——'"

"Oh!" here cried Miss Crump, as if in exceeding pain (and whether Mr. Eglantine had twitched, pulled, or hurt any one individual hair of that lovely head I don't know),—"Oh, you are killing me, Mr. Eglantine!"

And with this mamma, who was in her attitude, holding up the end of her boa as a visionary tambourine, and Mr. Walker, who was looking at her, and in his amusement at the mother's performances had almost forgotten the charms of the daughter,—both turned round at once, and looked at her with many expressions of sympathy, while Eglantine, in a voice of reproach, said, "*Killed* you, Morgiana! I kill *you?*"

"I'm better now," said the young lady, with a smile,—"I'm better, Mr. Archibald, now." And if the truth must be told, no greater coquette than Miss Morgiana existed in all Mayfair,—no, not among the most fashionable mistresses of the fashionable valets who frequented the "Bootjack." She believed herself to be the most fascinating creature that the world ever produced; she never saw a stranger but she tried these fascinations upon him; and her charms of manner and person were of that showy sort which is most popular in this world, where people are wont to admire most that which gives them the least trouble to see; and so you will find a tulip of a woman to be in fashion when a little humble violet or daisy of creation is

passed over without remark. Morgiana was a tulip among women, and the tulip-fanciers all came flocking round her.

Well, the said "Oh!" and "I'm better now, Mr. Archibald," thereby succeeded in drawing everybody's attention to her lovely self. By the latter words Mr. Eglantine was specially inflamed; he glanced

at Mr. Walker, and said, "Capting! didn't I tell you she was a *creecher?* See her hair, sir: it's as black and as glossy as satting. It weighs fifteen pound, that hair, sir; and I wouldn't let my apprentice —that blundering Mossrose, for instance (hang him!)—I wouldn't let any one but myself dress that hair for five hundred guineas! Ah, Miss Morgiana, remember that you *may always* have Eglantine to dress your hair!—remember that, that's all." And with this the worthy gentleman began rubbing delicately a little of the Eglantinia into those ambrosial locks, which he loved with all the love of a man and an artist.

And as for Morgiana showing her hair, I hope none of my readers will entertain a bad opinion of the poor girl for doing so. Her locks were her pride; she acted at the private theatre "hair parts," where she could appear on purpose to show them in a dishevelled state; and that her modesty was real and not affected may be proved by the fact that when Mr. Walker, stepping up in the midst of Eglantine's last speech, took hold of a lock of her hair very gently with his hand, she cried "Oh!" and started with all her might. And Mr. Eglantine observed very gravely, "Capting! Miss Crump's hair is to be seen and not to be touched, if you please."

"No more it is, Mr. Eglantine," said her mamma; "and now, as it's come to my turn, I beg the gentleman will be so obliging as to go."

"*Must I?*" cried Mr. Walker; and as it was half-past six, and he was engaged to dinner at the "Regent Club," and as he did not wish to make Eglantine jealous, who evidently was annoyed by his staying, he took his hat just as Miss Crump's coiffure was completed, and saluting her and her mamma, left the room.

"A tip-top swell, I can assure you," said Eglantine, nodding after him: "a regular bang-up chap, and no *mistake.* Intimate with the Marquess of Billingsgate, and Lord Vauxhall, and that set."

"He's very genteel," said Mrs. Crump.

"Law! I'm sure I think nothing of him," said Morgiana.

And Captain Walker walked towards his club, meditating on the beauties of Morgiana. "What hair," said he, "what eyes the girl has! they're as big as billiard-balls; and 5,000*l.* Eglantine's in luck! 5,000*l.*—she can't have it, it's impossible!"

No sooner was Mrs. Crump's front arranged, during the time of which operation Morgiana sat in perfect contentment looking at the last French fashions in the *Courrier des Dames,* and thinking how her pink satin slip would dye, and make just such a mantilla as that

represented in the engraving,—no sooner was Mrs. Crump's front arranged, than both ladies, taking leave of Mr. Eglantine, tripped back to the "Bootjack Hotel" in the neighbourhood, where a very neat green fly was already in waiting, the gentleman on the box of which (from a livery-stable in the neighbourhood) gave a knowing touch to his hat, and a salute with his whip, to the two ladies, as they entered the tavern.

"Mr. W.'s inside," said the man—a driver from Mr. Snaffle's establishment; "he's been in and out this score of times, and looking down the street for you." And in the house, in fact, was Mr. Woolsey, the tailor, who had hired the fly, and was engaged to conduct the ladies that evening to the play.

It was really rather too bad to think that Miss Morgiana, after going to one lover to have her hair dressed, should go with another to the play; but such is the way with lovely woman! Let her have a dozen admirers, and the dear coquette will exercise her power upon them all: and as a lady, when she has a large wardrobe, and a taste for variety in dress, will appear every day in a different costume, so will the young and giddy beauty wear her lovers, encouraging now the black whiskers, now smiling on the brown, now thinking that the gay smiling rattle of an admirer becomes her very well, and now adopting the sad sentimental melancholy one, according as her changeful fancy prompts her. Let us not be too angry with these uncertainties and caprices of beauty; and depend on it that, for the most part, those females who cry out loudest against the flightiness of their sisters, and rebuke their undue encouragement of this man or that, would do as much themselves if they had the chance, and are constant, as I am to my coat just now, because I have no other.

"Did you see Doubleyou, 'Gina dear?" said her mamma, addressing that young lady. "He's in the bar with your Pa, and has his military coat with the king's buttons, and looks like an officer."

This was Mr. Woolsey's style, his great aim being to look like an army gent, for many of whom he in his capacity of tailor made those splendid red and blue coats which characterize our military. As for the royal button, had not he made a set of coats for his late Majesty, George IV.? and he would add, when he narrated this circumstance, "Sir, Prince Blucher and Prince Swartzenberg's measure's in the house now; and what's more, I've cut for Wellington." I believe he would have gone to St. Helena to make a coat for Napoleon, so great was his ardour. He wore a blue black wig, and his whiskers were of the same hue. He was brief and stern in conversation; and

he always went to masquerades and balls in a field-marshal's uniform.

"He looks really quite the thing to night," continued Mrs. Crump.

"Yes," said 'Gina; "but he's such an odious wig, and the dye of his whiskers always comes off on his white gloves."

"Everybody has not their own hair, love," continued Mrs. Crump with a sigh; "but Eglantine's is beautiful."

"Every hairdresser's is," answered Morgiana, rather contemptuously; "but what I can't bear is that their fingers is always so very fat and pudgy."

In fact, something had gone wrong with the fair Morgiana. Was it that she had but little liking for the one pretender or the other? Was it that young Glauber, who acted Romeo in the private theatricals, was far younger and more agreeable than either? Or was it, that seeing a *real gentleman*, such as Mr. Walker, with whom she had had her first interview, she felt more and more the want of refinement in her other declared admirers? Certain, however, it is, that she was very reserved all the evening, in spite of the attentions of Mr. Woolsey; that she repeatedly looked round at the box-door, as if she expected some one to enter; and that she partook of only a very few oysters, indeed, out of the barrel which the gallant tailor had sent down to the "Bootjack," and off which the party supped.

"What is it?" said Mr. Woolsey to his ally, Crump, as they sat together after the retirement of the ladies. "She was dumb all night. She never once laughed at the farce, nor cried at the tragedy, and you know she laughs and cries uncommon. She only took half her negus, and not above a quarter of her beer."

"No more she did!" replied Mr. Crump, very calmly. "I think it must be the barber as has been captivating her: he dressed her hair for the play."

"Hang him, I'll shoot him!" said Mr. Woolsey. "A fat, foolish, effeminate beast like that marry Miss Morgiana? Never! I *will* shoot him. I'll provoke him next Saturday—I'll tread on his toe—I'll pull his nose."

"No quarrelling at the 'Kidneys!'" answered Crump sternly; "there shall be no quarrelling in that room as long as *I'm* in the chair!"

"Well, at any rate you'll stand my friend?"

"You know I will," answered the other. "You are honourable, and I like you better than Eglantine. I trust you more than Eglantine, sir. You're more of a man than Eglantine, though you *are* a

tailor ; and I wish with all my heart you may get Morgiana. Mrs. C. goes the other way, I know : but I tell you what, women will go their own ways, sir, and Morgy's like her mother in this point, and depend upon it, Morgy will decide for herself."

Mr. Woolsey presently went home, still persisting in his plan for the assassination of Eglantine. Mr. Crump went to bed very quietly, and snored through the night in his usual tone. Mr. Eglantine passed some feverish moments of jealousy, for he had come down to the club in the evening, and had heard that Morgiana was gone to the play with his rival. And Miss Morgiana dreamed of a man who was—must we say it?—exceedingly like Captain Howard Walker. "Mrs. Captain So-and-so!" thought she. "Oh, I do love a gentleman dearly!"

And about this time, too, Mr. Walker himself came rolling home from the "Regent," hiccupping, "Such hair!—such eyebrows!—such eyes! like b-b-billiard-balls, by Jove!"

CHAPTER II.

IN WHICH MR. WALKER MAKES THREE ATTEMPTS TO ASCERTAIN THE DWELLING OF MORGIANA.

THE day after the dinner at the "Regent Club," Mr. Walker stepped over to the shop of his friend the perfumer, where, as usual, the young man, Mr. Mossrose, was established in the front premises.

For some reason or other, the Captain was particularly good-humoured; and, quite forgetful of the words which had passed between him and Mr. Eglantine's lieutenant the day before, began addressing the latter with extreme cordiality.

"A good morning to you, **Mr. Mossrose**," said Captain Walker. "Why, sir, you look as fresh as your namesake,—you do, indeed, now, Mossrose."

"You look ash yellow ash a guinea," responded Mr. Mossrose, sulkily. He thought the Captain was hoaxing him.

"My good sir," replies the other, nothing cast down, "I drank rather too freely last night."

"The more beast you!" said Mr. Mossrose.

"Thank you, Mossrose; the same to you," answered the Captain.

"If you call me a beast I'll punch your head off!" answered the young man, who had much skill in the art which many of his brethren practise.

"I didn't, my fine fellow," replied Walker. "On the contrary, you——"

"Do you mean to give me the lie?" broke out the indignant

Mossrose, who hated the agent fiercely, and did not in the least care to conceal his hate.

In fact, it was his fixed purpose to pick a quarrel with Walker, and to drive him, if possible, from Mr. Eglantine's shop. "Do you mean to give me the lie, I say, Mr. Hooker Walker?"

"For heaven's sake, Amos, hold your tongue!" exclaimed the Captain, to whom the name of Hooker was as poison; but at this moment a customer stepping in, Mr. Amos exchanged his ferocious aspect for a bland grin, and Mr. Walker walked into the studio.

When in Mr. Eglantine's presence, Walker, too, was all smiles in a minute, sunk down on a settee, held out his hand to the perfumer, and began confidentially discoursing with him.

"*Such* a dinner, Tiny my boy," said he; "such prime fellows to eat it, too! Billingsgate, Vauxhall, Cinqbars, Buff of the Blues, and half-a-dozen more of the best fellows in town. And what do you think the dinner cost a head? I'll wager you'll never guess."

"Was it two guineas a head?—In course I mean without wine," said the genteel perfumer.

"Guess again!"

"Well, was it ten guineas a head? I'll guess any sum you please," replied Mr. Eglantine: "for I know that when you *nobs* are together, you don't spare your money. I myself, at the 'Star and Garter' at Richmond, once paid——"

"Eighteenpence?"

"Heighteenpence, sir!—I paid five-and-thirty shillings per 'ead. I'd have you to know that I can act as a gentleman as well as any other gentleman, sir," answered the perfumer with much dignity.

"Well, eighteenpence was what *we* paid, and not a rap more upon my honour."

"Nonsense, you're joking. The Marquess of Billinsgate dine for eighteenpence? Why, hang it, if I was a marquess, I'd pay a five-pound note for my lunch."

"You little know the person, Master Eglantine," replied the Captain, with a smile of contemptuous superiority; "you little know the real man of fashion, my good fellow. Simplicity, sir,—simplicity's the characteristic of the real gentleman, and so I'll tell you what we had for dinner."

"Turtle and venison, of course:—no nob dines without *them*."

"Psha! we're sick of 'em! We had pea-soup and boiled tripe! What do you think of *that?* We had sprats and herrings, a bullock's heart, a baked shoulder of mutton and potatoes, pig's-fry and Irish

stew. *I* ordered the dinner, sir, and got more credit for inventing it than they ever gave to Ude or Soyer. The Marquess was in ecstasies, the Earl devoured half a bushel of sprats, and if the Viscount is not laid up with a surfeit of bullock's heart, my name's not Howard Walker. Billy, as I call him, was in the chair, and gave my health; and what do you think the rascal proposed?"

"What *did* his lordship propose?"

"That every man present should subscribe twopence, and pay for my share of the dinner. By Jove! it is true, and the money was handed to me in a pewter-pot, of which they also begged to make me a present. We afterwards went to Tom Spring's, from Tom's to the 'Finish,' from the 'Finish' to the watch-house—that is, *they* did,—and sent for me, just as I was getting into bed, to bail them all out."

"They're happy dogs, those young noblemen," said Mr. Eglantine; "nothing but pleasure from morning till night; no affectation neither,—no *hoture;* but manly, downright, straightforward good fellows."

"Should you like to meet them, Tiny my boy?" said the Captain.

"If I did, sir, I hope I should show myself to be the gentleman," answered Mr. Eglantine.

"Well, you *shall* meet them, and Lady Billingsgate shall order her perfumes at your shop. We are going to dine, next week, all our set, at mealy-faced Bob's, and you shall be my guest," cried the Captain, slapping the delighted artist on the back. "And now, my boy, tell me how *you* spent the evening."

"At my club, sir," answered Mr. Eglantine, blushing rather.

"What! not at the play with the lovely black-eyed Miss—what is her name, Eglantine?"

"Never mind her name, Captain," replied Eglantine, partly from prudence and partly from shame. He had not the heart to own it was Crump, and he did not care that the Captain should know more of his destined bride.

"You wish to keep the five thousand to yourself—eh, you rogue?" responded the Captain, with a good-humoured air, although exceedingly mortified; for, to say the truth, he had put himself to the trouble of telling the above long story of the dinner, and of promising to introduce Eglantine to the lords, solely that he might elicit from that gentleman's good-humour some further particulars regarding the young lady with the billiard-ball eyes. It was for the very same reason, too, that he had made the attempt at reconciliation with Mr. Mossrose

which had just so signally failed. Nor would the reader, did he know Mr. W. better, at all require to have the above explanation; but as yet we are only at the first chapter of his history, and who is to know what the hero's motives can be unless we take the trouble to explain?

Well, the little dignified answer of the worthy dealer in bergamot, "*Never mind her name, Captain!*" threw the gallant Captain quite aback; and though he sat for a quarter of an hour longer, and was exceedingly kind; and though he threw out some skilful hints, yet the perfumer was quite unconquerable; or, rather, he was too frightened to tell: the poor, fat, timid, easy, good-natured gentleman was always the prey of rogues,—panting and floundering in one rascal's snare or another's. He had the dissimulation, too, which timid men have; and felt the presence of a victimiser as a hare does of a greyhound. Now he would be quite still, now he would double, and now he would run, and then came the end. He knew, by his sure instinct of fear, that the Captain had, in asking these questions, a scheme against him, and so he was cautious, and trembled, and doubted. And oh! how he thanked his stars when Lady Grogmore's chariot drove up, with the Misses Grogmore, who wanted their hair dressed, and were going to a breakfast at three o'clock!

"I'll look in again, Tiny," said the Captain, on hearing the summons.

"*Do*, Captain," said the other: "*thank you;*" and went into the lady's studio with a heavy heart.

"Get out of the way, you infernal villain!" roared the Captain, with many oaths, to Lady Grogmore's large footman, with ruby-coloured tights, who was standing inhaling the ten thousand perfumes of the shop; and the latter, moving away in great terror, the gallant agent passed out, quite heedless of the grin of Mr. Mossrose.

Walker was in a fury at his want of success, and walked down Bond Street in a fury. "I *will* know where the girl lives!" swore he. "I'll spend a five-pound note, by Jove! rather than not know where she lives!"

"*That you would—I know you would!*" said a little grave low voice, all of a sudden, by his side. "Pooh! what's money to you?"

Walker looked down; it was Tom Dale.

Who in London did not know little Tom Dale? He had cheeks like an apple, and his hair curled every morning, and a little blue stock, and always two new magazines under his arm, and an umbrella

and a little brown frock-coat, and big square-toed shoes with which he went *papping* down the street. He was everywhere at once. Everybody met him every day, and he knew everything that everybody ever did; though nobody ever knew what *he* did. He was, they say, a hundred years old, and had never dined at his own charge once in those hundred years. He looked like a figure out of a wax-work, with glassy, clear, meaningless eyes: he always spoke with a grin; he knew what you had for dinner the day before he met you, and what everybody had had for dinner for a century back almost. He was the receptacle of all the scandal of all the world, from Bond Street to Bread Street; he knew all the authors, all the actors, all the "notorieties" of the town, and the private histories of each. That is, he never knew anything really, but supplied deficiencies of truth and memory, with ready-coined, never-failing lies. He was the most benevolent man in the universe, and never saw you without telling you everything most cruel of your neighbour, and when he left you he went to do the same kind turn by yourself.

"Pooh! what's money to you, my dear boy?" said little Tom Dale, who had just come out of Ebers's, where he had been filching an opera-ticket. "You make it in bushels in the City, you know you do,—in thousands. *I* saw you go into Eglantine's. Fine business that; finest in London. Five-shilling cakes of soap, my dear boy. *I* can't wash with such. Thousands a year that man has made—hasn't he?"

"Upon my word, Tom, I don't know," says the Captain.

"*You* not know? Don't tell me. You know everything—you agents. You *know* he makes five thousand a year,—ay, and might make ten, but you know why he don't."

"Indeed I don't."

"Nonsense. Don't humbug a poor old fellow like me. Jews—Amos—fifty per cent., ay? Why can't he get his money from a good Christian?"

"I *have* heard something of that sort," said Walker, laughing. "Why, by Jove, Tom, you know everything!"

"*You* know everything, my dear boy. You know what a rascally trick that opera creature served him, poor fellow. Cashmere shawls —Storr and Mortimer's—'Star and Garter.' Much better dine quiet off pea-soup and sprats,—ay? His betters have, as you know very well."

"Pea-soup and sprats! What! have you heard of that already?"

"Who bailed Lord Billingsgate, hey, you rogue?" and here Tom

gave a knowing and almost demoniacal grin. "Who wouldn't go to the 'Finish?' Who had the piece of plate presented to him filled with sovereigns? And you deserved it, my dear boy—you deserved it. They said it was only halfpence, but *I* know better!" and here Tom went off in a cough.

"I say, Tom," cried Walker, inspired with a sudden thought, "you, who know everything, and are a theatrical man, did you ever know a Miss Delancy, an actress?"

"At 'Sadler's Wells' in '16! Of course I did. Real name was Budge. Lord Slapper admired her very much, my dear boy. She married a man by the name of Crump, his lordship's black footman, and brought him five thousand pounds; and they keep the 'Bootjack' public-house in Bunker's Buildings, and they've got fourteen children. Is one of them handsome, eh, you sly rogue,—and is it that which you will give five pounds to know? God bless you, my dear, dear boy. Jones, my dear friend, how are you?"

And now, seizing on Jones, Tom Dale left Mr Walker alone, and proceeded to pour into Mr. Jones's ear an account of the individual whom he had just quitted; how he was the best fellow in the world, and Jones *knew* it; how he was in a fine way of making his fortune; how he had been in the Fleet many times, and how he was at this moment employed in looking out for a young lady of whom a certain great marquess (whom Jones knew very well, too) had expressed an admiration.

But for these observations, which he did not hear, Captain Walker, it may be pronounced, did not care. His eyes brightened up, he marched quickly and gaily away; and turning into his own chambers opposite Eglantine's shop, saluted that establishment with a grin of triumph. "You wouldn't tell me her name, wouldn't you?" said Mr. Walker. "Well, the luck's with me now, and here goes."

Two days after, as Mr. Eglantine, with white gloves and a case of eau-de-Cologne as a present in his pocket, arrived at the "Bootjack Hotel," Little Bunker's Buildings, Berkeley Square (for it must out—that was the place in which Mr. Crump's inn was situated), he paused for a moment at the threshold of the little house of entertainment, and listened, with beating heart, to the sound of delicious music that a well-known voice was uttering within.

The moon was playing in silvery brightness down the gutter of the humble street. A "helper," rubbing down one of Lady Smigsmag's carriage-horses, even paused in his whistle to listen to the strain. Mr. Tressle's man, who had been professionally occupied.

ceased his tap-tap upon the coffin which he was getting in readiness. The greengrocer (there is always a greengrocer in those narrow streets, and he goes out in white Berlin gloves as a supernumerary footman) was standing charmed at his little green gate; the cobbler (there is always a cobbler too) was drunk, as usual, of evenings, but, with unusual subordination, never sung except when the *refrain* of the ditty arrived, when he hiccupped it forth with tipsy loyalty; and Eglantine leaned against the Chequers painted on the door-side under the name of Crump, and looked at the red illumined curtain of the bar, and the vast, well-known shadow of Mrs. Crump's turban within. Now and again the shadow of that worthy matron's hand would be seen to grasp the shadow of a bottle; then the shadow of a cup would rise towards the turban, and still the strain proceeded. Eglantine, I say, took out his yellow bandanna, and brushed the beady drops from his brow, and laid the contents of his white kids on his heart, and sighed with ecstatic sympathy. The song began,—

"Come to the greenwood tree,*
Come where the dark woods be.
Dearest, O come with me!
Let us rove—O my love—O my love!
O my-y love!
(*Drunken Cobbler without*)— O my-y love!

"Beast!" says Eglantine.

"Come—'tis the moonlight hour,
Dew is on leaf and flower,
Come to the linden bower,—
Let us rove—O my love—O my love!
Let us ro-o-ove, lurlurliety; yes, we'll rove, lurlurliety,
Through the gro-o-ove, lurlurliety—lurlurli-e-i-e-i-e-i!
(*Cobbler as usual*)— Let us ro-o-ove," &c.

"*You* here?" says another individual, coming clinking up the street, in a military-cut dress-coat, the buttons whereof shone very bright in the moonlight. "*You* here, Eglantine?—you're always here."

"Hush, Woolsey," said Mr. Eglantine to his rival the tailor (for he was the individual in question); and Woolsey, accordingly, put

* The words of this song are copyright, nor will the copyright be sold for less than twopence-halfpenny.

his back against the opposite door-post and chequers, so that (with poor Eglantine's bulk) nothing much thicker than a sheet of paper could pass out or in. And thus these two amorous caryatides kept guard as the song continued :—

"Dark is the wood, and wide,
Dangers, they say, betide ;
But, at my Albert's side,
Nought I fear, O my love—O my love !

"Welcome the greenwood tree,
Welcome the forest tree,
Dearest, with thee, with thee,
Nought I fear, O my love—O ma-a-y love !"

Eglantine's fine eyes were filled with tears as Morgiana passionately uttered the above beautiful words. Little Woolsey's eyes glistened, as he clenched his fist with an oath, and said, "Show me any singing that can beat *that*. Cobbler, shut your mouth, or I'll break your head !"

But the cobbler, regardless of the threat, continued to perform the "Lurlurliety" with great accuracy ; and when that was ended, both on his part and Morgiana's, a rapturous knocking of glasses was heard in the little bar, then a great clapping of hands, and finally, somebody shouted "*Brava !*"

"Brava !"

At that word Eglantine turned deadly pale, then gave a start, then a rush forward, which pinned, or rather cushioned, the tailor against the wall ; then twisting himself abruptly round, he sprung to the door of the bar, and bounced into that apartment.

"*How are you, my nosegay ?*" exclaimed the same voice which had shouted "Brava." It was that of Captain Walker.

At ten o'clock the next morning, a gentleman, with the King's button on his military coat, walked abruptly into Mr. Eglantine's shop, and, turning on Mr. Mossrose, said, "Tell your master I want to see him."

"He's in his studio," said Mr. Mossrose.

"Well, then, fellow, go and fetch him !"

And Mossrose, thinking it must be the Lord Chamberlain, or Doctor Prætorius at least, walked into the studio, where the perfumer was seated in a very glossy old silk dressing-gown, his fair hair hanging over his white face, his double chin over his flaccid, whitey-brown shirt-collar, his pea-green slippers on the hob, and on the fire, the

pot of chocolate which was simmering for his breakfast. A lazier fellow than poor Eglantine it would be hard to find; whereas, on the contrary, Woolsey was always up and brushed, spick-and-span, at seven o'clock; and had gone through his books, and given out the work for the journeymen, and eaten a hearty breakfast of rashers of bacon, before Eglantine had put the usual pound of grease to his hair (his fingers were always as damp and shiny as if he had them in a pomatum-pot), and arranged his figure for the day.

"Here's a gent wants you in the shop," says Mr. Mossrose, leaving the door of communication wide open.

"Say I'm in bed, Mr. Mossrose; I'm out of sperrets, and really can see nobody."

"It's some one from Vindsor, I think; he's got the royal button," says Mossrose.

"It's me—Woolsey," shouted the little man from the shop.

Mr. Eglantine at this jumped up, made a rush to the door leading to his private apartment, and disappeared in a twinkling. But it must not be imagined that he fled in order to avoid Mr. Woolsey. He only went away for one minute just to put on his belt, for he was ashamed to be seen without it by his rival.

This being assumed, and his toilet somewhat arranged, Mr. Woolsey was admitted into his private room. And Mossrose would have heard every word of the conversation between those two gentlemen, had not Woolsey, opening the door, suddenly pounced on the assistant, taken him by the collar, and told him to disappear altogether into the shop: which Mossrose did; vowing he would have his revenge.

The subject on which Woolsey had come to treat was an important one. "Mr. Eglantine," says he, "there's no use disguising from one another that we are both of us in love with Miss Morgiana, and that our chances up to this time have been pretty equal. But that Captain whom you introduced, like an ass as you were——"

"An ass, Mr. Woolsey? I'd have you to know, sir, that I'm no more a hass than you are, sir; and as for introducing the Captain, I did no such thing."

"Well, well, he's got a-poaching into our preserves somehow He's evidently sweet upon the young woman, and is a more fashionable chap than either of us two. We must get him out of the house, sir—we must circumwent him; and *then*, Mr. Eglantine, will be time enough for you and me to try which is the best man."

"*He* the best man!" thought Eglantine; "the little, bald, unsightly

tailor-creature! A man with no more soul than his smoothing-hiron!" The perfumer, as may be imagined, did not utter this sentiment aloud, but expressed himself quite willing to enter into any *hamicable* arrangement, by which the new candidate for Miss Crump's favour must be thrown over. It was, accordingly, agreed between the two gentlemen that they should coalesce against the common enemy; that they should, by reciting many perfectly well-founded stories in the Captain's disfavour, influence the minds of Miss Crump's parents, and of herself, if possible, against this wolf in sheep's clothing; and that, when they were once fairly rid of him, each should be at liberty, as before, to prefer his own claim.

"I have thought of a subject," said the little tailor, turning very red, and hemming and hawing a great deal. "I've thought, I say, of a pint, which may be resorted to with advantage at the present juncture, and in which each of us may be useful to the other. An exchange, Mr. Eglantine; do you take?"

"Do you mean an accommodation-bill?" said Eglantine, whose mind ran a good deal on that species of exchange.

"Pooh, nonsense, sir! The name of *our* firm is, I flatter myself, a little more up in the market than some other people's names."

"Do you mean to insult the name of Archibald Eglantine, sir? I'd have you to know that at three months——"

"Nonsense!" says Mr. Woolsey, mastering his emotion. "There's no use a-quarrelling, Mr. E.: we're not in love with each other, I know that. You wish me hanged, or as good, I know that!"

"Indeed I don't, sir!"

"You do, sir; I tell you, you do! and what's more, I wish the same to you—transported, at any rate! But as two sailors, when a boat's a-sinking, though they hate each other ever so much, will help and bale the boat out; so, sir, let *us* act: let us be the two sailors."

"Bail, sir?" said Eglantine, as usual mistaking the drift of the argument. "I'll bail no man! If you're in difficulties, I think you had better go to your senior partner, Mr. Woolsey." And Eglantine's cowardly little soul was filled with a savage satisfaction to think that his enemy was in distress, and actually obliged to come to *him* for succour.

"You're enough to make Job swear, you great fat stupid lazy old barber!" roared Mr. Woolsey, in a fury.

Eglantine jumped up and made for the bell-rope. The gallant little tailor laughed.

"There's no need to call in Betsy," said he. "I'm not a-going to eat you, Eglantine; you're a bigger man than me: if you were just to

fall on me, you'd smother me! Just sit still on the sofa and listen to reason."

"Well, sir, pro-ceed," said the barber with a gasp.

"Now, listen! What's the darling wish of your heart? I know it, sir! you've told it to Mr. Tressle, sir, and other gents at the club. The darling wish of your heart, sir, is to have a slap-up coat turned out of the *ateliers* of Messrs. Linsey, Woolsey and Company. You said you'd give twenty guineas for one of our coats, you know you did! Lord Bolsterton's a fatter man than you, and look what a figure we turn *him* out. Can any firm in England dress Lord Bolsterton but us, so as to make his lordship look decent? I defy 'em, sir! We could have given Daniel Lambert a figure!"

"If I want a coat, sir," said Mr. Eglantine, "and I don't deny it, there's some people want *a head of hair!*"

"That's the very point I was coming to," said the tailor, resuming the violent blush which was mentioned as having suffused his countenance at the beginning of the conversation. "Let us have terms of mutual accommodation. Make me a wig, Mr. Eglantine, and though I never yet cut a yard of cloth except for a gentleman, I'll pledge you my word I'll make you a coat."

"*Will* you, honour bright?" says Eglantine.

"Honour bright," says the tailor. "Look!" and in an instant he drew from his pocket one of those slips of parchment which gentlemen of his profession carry, and putting Eglantine into the proper position, began to take the preliminary observations. He felt Eglantine's heart thump with happiness as his measure passed over that soft part of the perfumer's person.

Then pulling down the window-blind, and looking that the door was locked, and blushing still more deeply than ever, the tailor seated himself in an arm-chair towards which Mr. Eglantine beckoned him, and, taking off his black wig, exposed his head to the great perruquier's gaze. Mr. Eglantine looked at it, measured it, manipulated it, sat for three minutes with his head in his hand and his elbow on his knee gazing at the tailor's cranium with all his might, walked round it twice or thrice, and then said, "It's enough, Mr. Woolsey. Consider the job as done. And now, sir," said he, with a greatly relieved air—"and now, Woolsey, let us 'ave a glass of curaçoa to celebrate this hauspicious meeting."

The tailor, however, stiffly replied that he never drank in a morning, and left the room without offering to shake Mr. Eglantine by the hand: for he despised that gentleman very heartily, and himself, too,

for coming to any compromise with him, and for so far demeaning himself as to make a coat for a barber.

Looking from his chambers on the other side of the street, that inevitable Mr. Walker saw the tailor issuing from the perfumer's shop, and was at no loss to guess that something extraordinary must be in progress when two such bitter enemies met together.

CHAPTER III.

WHAT CAME OF MR. WALKER'S DISCOVERY OF THE "BOOTJACK."

It is very easy to state how the Captain came to take up that proud position at the "Bootjack" which we have seen him occupy on the evening when the sound of the fatal "brava" so astonished Mr. Eglantine.

The mere entry into the establishment was, of course, not difficult. Any person by simply uttering the words, "A pint of beer," was free of the "Bootjack;" and it was some such watchword that Howard Walker employed when he made his first appearance. He requested to be shown into a parlour where he might repose himself for a while, and was ushered into that very *sanctum* where the "Kidney Club" met. Then he stated that the beer was the best he had ever tasted, except in Bavaria, and in some parts of Spain, he added; and professing to be extremely "peckish," requested to know if there were any cold meat in the house whereof he could make a dinner.

"I don't usually dine at this hour, landlord," said he, flinging down a half-sovereign for payment of the beer; "but your parlour looks so comfortable and the Windsor chairs are so snug, that I'm sure I could not dine better at the first club in London."

"*One* of the first clubs in London is held in this very room," said Mr. Crump, very well pleased; "and attended by some of the best gents in town, too. We call it the 'Kidney Club.'"

"Why, bless my soul! it is the very club my friend Eglantine has

so often talked to me about, and attended by some of the tip-top tradesmen of the metropolis!"

"There's better men here than Mr. Eglantine," replied Mr. Crump, "though he's a good man—I don't say he's not a good man—but

there's better. Mr. Clinker, sir; Mr. Woolsey, of the house of Linsey, Woolsey and Co——"

"The great army-clothiers!" cried Walker, "the first house in town!" and so continued, with exceeding urbanity, holding conver-

sation with Mr. Crump, until the honest landlord retired delighted, and told Mrs. Crump in the bar that there was a tip-top swell in the "Kidney" parlour, who was a-going to have his dinner there.

Fortune favoured the brave Captain in every way. It was just Mr. Crump's own dinner-hour; and on Mrs. Crump stepping into the parlour to ask the guest whether he would like a slice of the joint to which the family were about to sit down, fancy that lady's start of astonishment at recognizing Mr. Eglantine's facetious friend of the day before. The Captain at once demanded permission to partake of the joint at the family table; the lady could not with any great reason deny this request; the Captain was inducted into the bar; and Miss Crump, who always came down late for dinner, was even more astonished than her mamma on beholding the occupier of the fourth place at the table. Had she expected to see the fascinating stranger so soon again? I think she had. Her big eyes said as much, as, furtively looking up at Mr. Walker's face, they caught his looks; and then bouncing down again towards her plate, pretended to be very busy in looking at the boiled beef and carrots there displayed. She blushed far redder than those carrots, but her shining ringlets hid her confusion together with her lovely face.

Sweet Morgiana! the billiard-ball eyes had a tremendous effect on the Captain. They fell plump, as it were, into the pocket of his heart; and he gallantly proposed to treat the company to a bottle of champagne, which was accepted without much difficulty.

Mr. Crump, under pretence of going to the cellar (where he said he had some cases of the finest champagne in Europe), called Dick, the boy, to him, and despatched him with all speed to a wine-merchant's, where a couple of bottles of the liquor were procured.

"Bring up two bottles, Mr. C.," Captain Walker gallantly said when Crump made his move, as it were, to the cellar; and it may be imagined after the two bottles were drunk (of which Mrs. Crump took at least nine glasses to her share), how happy, merry, and confidential the whole party had become. Crump told his story of the "Bootjack," and whose boot it had drawn; the former Miss Delancy expatiated on her past theatrical life, and the pictures hanging round the room. Miss was equally communicative; and, in short, the Captain had all the secrets of the little family in his possession ere sunset. He knew that Miss cared little for either of her suitors, about whom mamma and papa had a little quarrel. He heard Mrs. Crump talk of Morgiana's property, and fell more in love with her than ever. Then came tea, the luscious crumpet, the quiet game at cribbage, and

the song—the song which poor Eglantine heard, and which caused Woolsey's rage and his despair.

At the close of the evening the tailor was in a greater rage, and the perfumer in greater despair than ever. He had made his little present of eau-de-Cologne. "Oh fie!" says the Captain, with a horse-laugh, "it *smells of the shop!*" He taunted the tailor about his wig, and the honest fellow had only an oath to give by way of repartee. He told his stories about his club and his lordly friends. What chance had either against the all-accomplished Howard Walker?

Old Crump, with a good innate sense of right and wrong, hated the man; Mrs. Crump did not feel quite at her ease regarding him; but Morgiana thought him the most delightful person the world ever produced.

Eglantine's usual morning costume was a blue satin neckcloth embroidered with butterflies and ornamented with a brandy-ball brooch, a light shawl waistcoat, and a rhubarb-coloured coat of the sort which, I believe, are called Taglionis, and which have no waist-buttons, and make a pretence, as it were, to have no waists, but are in reality adopted by the fat in order to give them a waist. Nothing easier for an obese man than to have a waist; he has but to pinch his middle part a little and the very fat on either side pushed violently forward *makes* a waist, as it were, and our worthy perfumer's figure was that of a bolster cut almost in two with a string.

Walker presently saw him at his shop-door grinning in this costume, twiddling his ringlets with his dumpy greasy fingers, glittering with oil and rings, and looking so exceedingly contented and happy that the estate-agent felt assured some very satisfactory conspiracy had been planned between the tailor and him. How was Mr. Walker to learn what the scheme was? Alas! the poor fellow's vanity and delight were such, that he could not keep silent as to the cause of his satisfaction, and rather than not mention it at all, in the fulness of his heart he would have told his secret to Mr. Mossrose himself.

"When I get my coat," thought the Bond Street Alnaschar, "I'll hire of Snaffle that easy-going cream-coloured 'oss that he bought from Astley's, and I'll canter through the Park, and *won't* I pass through Little Bunker's Buildings, that's all? I'll wear my grey trousers with the velvet stripe down the side, and get my spurs lacquered up, and a French polish to my boot; and if I don't *do* for the Captain and the tailor too, my name's not Archibald. And I know what I'll do: I'll hire the small Clarence, and invite the Crumps

to dinner at the 'Gar and Starter'" (this was his facetious way of calling the "Star and Garter"), "and I'll ride by them all the way to Richmond. It's rather a long ride, but with Snaffle's soft saddle I can do it pretty easy, I dare say." And so the honest fellow built castles upon castles in the air; and the last most beautiful vision of all was Miss Crump "in white satting, with a horange-flower in her 'air," putting him in possession of "her lovely 'and before the haltar of St. George's, 'Anover Square." As for Woolsey, Eglantine determined that he should have the best wig his art could produce; for he had not the least fear of his rival.

These points then being arranged to the poor fellow's satisfaction, what does he do but send out for half a quire of pink note-paper, and in a filigree envelope despatch a note of invitation to the ladies at the "Bootjack:"—

"*Bower of Bloom, Bond Street,*
"*Thursday.*

"Mr. Archibald Eglantine presents his compliments to Mrs. and Miss Crump, and requests the *honour and pleasure* of their company at the 'Star and Garter' at Richmond to an early dinner on Sunday next.

"*If agreeable,* Mr. Eglantine's carriage will be at your door at three o'clock, and I propose to accompany them on horseback if agreeable likewise."

This note was sealed with yellow wax, and sent to its destination; and of course Mr. Eglantine went himself for the answer in the evening: and of course he told the ladies to look out for a certain new coat he was going to sport on Sunday; and of course Mr. Walker happens to call the next day with spare tickets for Mrs. Crump and her daughter, when the whole secret was laid bare to him,—how the ladies were going to Richmond on Sunday in Mr. Snaffle's Clarence, and how Mr. Eglantine was to ride by their side.

Mr. Walker did not keep horses of his own; his magnificent friends at the "Regent" had plenty in their stables, and some of these were at livery at the establishment of the Captain's old "college" companion, Mr. Snaffle. It was easy, therefore, for the Captain to renew his acquaintance with that individual. So, hanging on the arm of my Lord Vauxhall, Captain Walker next day made his appearance at Snaffle's livery-stables, and looked at the various horses there for sale or at bait, and soon managed, by putting some facetious questions to Mr. Snaffle regarding the "Kidney Club," &c., to place himself on a friendly footing with that gentleman, and to learn from him what horse Mr. Eglantine was to ride on Sunday.

The monster Walker had fully determined in his mind that Eglantine should *fall off* that horse in the course of his Sunday's ride.

"That sing'lar hanimal," said Mr. Snaffle, pointing to the old horse, "is the celebrated Hemperor that was the wonder of Hastley's some years back, and was parted with by Mr. Ducrow honly because his feelin's wouldn't allow him to keep him no longer after the death of the first Mrs. D., who invariably rode him. I bought him, thinking that p'raps ladies and Cockney bucks might like to ride him (for his haction is wonderful, and he canters like a harm-chair); but he's not safe on any day except Sundays."

"And why's that?" asked Captain Walker. "Why is he safer on Sundays than other days?"

"*Because there's no music* in the streets on Sundays. The first gent that rode him found himself dancing a quadrille in Hupper Brook Street to an 'urdy-gurdy that was playing 'Cherry Ripe,' such is the natur of the hanimal. And if you reklect the play of the 'Battle of Hoysterlitz,' in which Mrs. D. hacted 'the female hussar,' you may remember how she and the horse died in the third act to the toon of 'God preserve the Emperor,' from which this horse took his name. Only play that toon to him, and he rears hisself up, beats the hair in time with his forelegs, and then sinks gently to the ground as though he were carried off by a cannon-ball. He served a lady hopposite Hapsley Ouse so one day, and since then I've never let him out to a friend except on Sunday, when, in course, there's no danger. Heglantine *is* a friend of mine, and of course I wouldn't put the poor fellow on a hanimal I couldn't trust."

After a little more conversation, my lord and his friend quitted Mr. Snaffle's, and as they walked away towards the "Regent," his lordship might be heard shrieking with laughter, crying, "Capital, by jingo! exthlent! Dwive down in the dwag! Take Lungly. Worth a thousand pound, by Jove!" and similar ejaculations, indicative of exceeding delight.

On Saturday morning, at ten o'clock to a moment, Mr. Woolsey called at Mr. Eglantine's with a yellow handkerchief under his arm. It contained the best and handsomest body-coat that ever gentleman put on. It fitted Eglantine to a nicety—it did not pinch him in the least, and yet it was of so exquisite a cut that the perfumer found, as he gazed delighted in the glass, that he looked like a manly, portly, high-bred gentleman—a lieutenant-colonel in the army, at the very least.

"You're a full man, Eglantine," said the tailor, delighted, too,

with his own work; "but that can't be helped. You look more like Hercules than Falstaff now, sir; and if a coat can make a gentleman, a gentleman you are. Let me recommend you to sink the blue cravat, and take the stripes off your trousers. Dress quiet, sir; draw it mild. Plain waistcoat, dark trousers, black neckcloth, black hat, and if there's a better-dressed man in Europe to-morrow I'm a Dutchman."

"Thank you, Woolsey—thank you, my dear sir," said the charmed perfumer. "And now I'll just trouble you to try on this here."

The wig had been made with equal skill; it was not in the florid style which Mr. Eglantine loved in his own person, but, as the perfumer said, a simple, straightforward head of hair. "It seems as if it had grown there all your life, Mr. Woolsey; nobody would tell that it was not your nat'ral colour" (Mr. Woolsey blushed)—"it makes you look ten year younger; and as for that scarecrow yonder, you'll never, I think, want to wear that again."

Woolsey looked in the glass, and was delighted too. The two rivals shook hands and straightway became friends, and in the overflowing of his heart the perfumer mentioned to the tailor the party which he had arranged for the next day, and offered him a seat in the carriage and at the dinner at the "Star and Garter." "Would you like to ride?" said Eglantine, with rather a consequential air. "Snaffle will mount you, and we can go one on each side of the ladies, if you like."

But Woolsey humbly said he was not a riding man, and gladly consented to take a place in the Clarence carriage, provided he was allowed to bear half the expenses of the entertainment. This proposal was agreed to by Mr. Eglantine, and the two gentlemen parted to meet once more at the "Kidneys" that night, when everybody was edified by the friendly tone adopted between them.

Mr. Snaffle, at the club meeting, made the very same proposal to Mr. Woolsey that the perfumer had made; and stated that as Eglantine was going to ride Hemperor, Woolsey, at least, ought to mount too. But he was met by the same modest refusal on the tailor's part, who stated that he had never mounted a horse yet, and preferred greatly the use of a coach.

Eglantine's character as a "swell" rose greatly with the club that evening.

Two o'clock on Sunday came: the two beaux arrived punctually at the door to receive the two smiling ladies.

"Bless us, Mr. Eglantine!" said Miss Crump, quite struck by

him, "I never saw you look so handsome in your life." He could have flung his arms around her neck at the compliment. "And law, Ma! what has happened to Mr. Woolsey? doesn't he look ten years younger than yesterday?" Mamma assented, and Woolsey bowed gallantly, and the two gentlemen exchanged a nod of hearty friendship.

The day was delightful. Eglantine pranced along magnificently on his cantering arm-chair, with his hat on one ear, his left hand on his side, and his head flung over his shoulder, and throwing underglances at Morgiana whenever the "Emperor" was in advance of the Clarence. The "Emperor" pricked up his ears a little uneasily passing the Ebenezer chapel in Richmond, where the congregation were singing a hymn, but beyond this no accident occurred; nor was Mr. Eglantine in the least stiff or fatigued by the time the party reached Richmond, where he arrived time enough to give his steed into the charge of an ostler, and to present his elbow to the ladies as they alighted from the Clarence carriage.

What this jovial party ate for dinner at the "Star and Garter" need not here be set down. If they did not drink champagne I am very much mistaken. They were as merry as any four people in Christendom; and between the bewildering attentions of the perfumer, and the manly courtesy of the tailor, Morgiana very likely forgot the gallant Captain, or, at least, was very happy in his absence.

At eight o'clock they began to drive homewards. "*Won't* you come into the carriage?" said Morgiana to Eglantine, with one of her tenderest looks; "Dick can ride the horse." But Archibald was too great a lover of equestrian exercise. "I'm afraid to trust anybody on this horse," said he with a knowing look; and so he pranced away by the side of the little carriage. The moon was brilliant, and, with the aid of the gas-lamps, illuminated the whole face of the country in a way inexpressibly lovely.

Presently, in the distance, the sweet and plaintive notes of a bugle were heard, and the performer, with great delicacy, executed a religious air. "Music, too! heavenly!" said Morgiana, throwing up her eyes to the stars. The music came nearer and nearer, and the delight of the company was only more intense. The fly was going at about four miles an hour, and the "Emperor" began cantering to time at the same rapid pace.

"This must be some gallantry of yours, Mr. Woolsey," said the romantic Morgiana, turning upon that gentleman. "Mr. Eglantine treated us to the dinner, and you have provided us with the music."

Now Woolsey had been a little, a very little, dissatisfied during the course of the evening's entertainment, by fancying that Eglantine, a much more voluble person than himself, had obtained rather an undue share of the ladies' favour; and as he himself paid half of the expenses, he felt very much vexed to think that the perfumer should take all the credit of the business to himself. So when Miss Crump asked if he had provided the music, he foolishly made an evasive reply to her query, and rather wished her to imagine that he *had* performed that piece of gallantry. "If it pleases *you*, Miss Morgiana," said this artful Schneider, "what more need any man ask? wouldn't I have all Drury Lane orchestra to please you?"

The bugle had by this time arrived quite close to the Clarence carriage, and if Morgiana had looked round she might have seen whence the music came. Behind her came slowly a drag, or private stage-coach, with four horses. Two grooms with cockades and folded arms were behind; and driving on the box, a little gentleman, with a blue bird's-eye neckcloth, and a white coat. A bugleman was by his side, who performed the melodies which so delighted Miss Crump. He played very gently and sweetly, and "God save the King" trembled so softly out of the brazen orifice of his bugle, that the Crumps, the tailor, and Eglantine himself, who was riding close by the carriage, were quite charmed and subdued.

"Thank you, *dear* Mr. Woolsey," said the grateful Morgiana; which made Eglantine stare, and Woolsey was just saying, "Really, upon my word, I've nothing to do with it," when the man on the drag-box said to the bugleman, "Now!"

The bugleman began the tune of—

> "Heaven preserve our Emperor Fra-an-cis,
> Rum tum-ti-tum-ti-titty-ti."

At the sound, the Emperor reared himself (with a roar from Mr. Eglantine)—reared and beat the air with his fore-paws. Eglantine flung his arms round the beast's neck, still he kept beating time with his fore-paws. Mrs. Crump screamed: Mr. Woolsey, Dick, the Clarence coachman, Lord Vauxhall (for it was he), and his lordship's two grooms, burst into a shout of laughter; Morgiana cries "Mercy! mercy!" Eglantine yells "Stop!"—"Wo!"—"O!" and a thousand ejaculations of hideous terror; until, at last, down drops the "Emperor" stone dead in the middle of the road, as if carried off by a cannon-ball.

Fancy the situation, ye callous souls who laugh at the misery of

humanity, fancy the situation of poor Eglantine under the "Emperor!" He had fallen very easy, the animal lay perfectly quiet, and the perfumer was to all intents and purposes as dead as the animal. He had not fainted, but he was immovable with terror; he lay in a puddle, and thought it was his own blood gushing from him; and he would have lain there until Monday morning, if my lord's grooms, descending, had not dragged him by the coat-collar from under the beast, who still lay quiet.

"Play 'Charming Judy Callaghan,' will ye?" says Mr. Snaffle's man, the fly-driver; on which the bugler performed that lively air, and up started the horse, and the grooms, who were rubbing Mr. Eglantine down against a lamp-post, invited him to remount.

But his heart was too broken for that. The ladies gladly made room for him in the Clarence. Dick mounted "Emperor" and rode homewards. The drag, too, drove away, playing, "O dear, what can the matter be?" and with a scowl of furious hate, Mr. Eglantine sat and regarded his rival. His pantaloons were split, and his coat torn up the back.

"Are you hurt much, dear Mr. Archibald?" said Morgiana, with unaffected compassion.

"N-not much," said the poor fellow, ready to burst into tears.

"Oh, Mr. Woolsey," added the good-natured girl, "how could you play such a trick?"

"Upon my word," Woolsey began, intending to plead innocence; but the ludicrousness of the situation was once more too much for him, and he burst out into a roar of laughter.

"You! you cowardly beast!" howled out Eglantine, now driven to fury,—"*you* laugh at me, you miserable cretur! Take *that*, sir!" and he fell upon him with all his might, and well-nigh throttled the tailor, and pummelling his eyes, his nose, his ears, with inconceivable rapidity, wrenched, finally, his wig off his head, and flung it into the road.

Morgiana saw that Woolsey had red hair.*

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* A French *proverbe* furnished the author with the notion of the rivalry between the Barber and the Tailor.

CHAPTER IV.

IN WHICH THE HEROINE HAS A NUMBER MORE LOVERS, AND CUTS A VERY DASHING FIGURE IN THE WORLD.

TWO years have elapsed since the festival at Richmond, which, begun so peaceably, ended in such general uproar. Morgiana never could be brought to pardon Woolsey's red hair, nor to help laughing at Eglantine's disasters, nor could the two gentlemen be reconciled to one another. Woolsey, indeed, sent a challenge to the perfumer to meet him with pistols, which the latter declined, saying, justly, that tradesmen had no business with such weapons; on this the tailor proposed to meet him with coats off, and have it out like men, in the presence of their friends of the "Kidney Club." The perfumer said he would be party to no such vulgar transaction; on which, Woolsey, exasperated, made an oath that he would tweak the perfumer's nose so surely as he ever entered the club-room; and thus *one* member of the "Kidneys" was compelled to vacate his arm-chair.

Woolsey himself attended every meeting regularly, but he did not evince that gaiety and good-humour which render men's company agreeable in clubs. On arriving, he would order the boy to "tell him when that scoundrel Eglantine came;" and, hanging up his hat on a peg, would scowl round the room, and tuck up his sleeves very high, and stretch, and shake his fingers and wrists, as if getting them ready for that pull of the nose which he intended to bestow upon his rival.

So prepared, he would sit down and smoke his pipe quite silently, glaring at all, and jumping up, and hitching up his coat-sleeves, when any one entered the room.

The "Kidneys" did not like this behaviour. Clinker ceased to come. Bustard, the poulterer, ceased to come. As for Snaffle, he also disappeared, for Woolsey wished to make him answerable for the misbehaviour of Eglantine, and proposed to him the duel which the latter had declined. So Snaffle went. Presently they all went, except the tailor and Tressle, who lived down the street, and these two would sit and puff their tobacco, one on each side of Crump, the

landlord, as silent as Indian chiefs in a wigwam. There grew to be more and more room for poor old Crump in his chair and in his clothes; the "Kidneys" were gone, and why should he remain? One Saturday he did not come down to preside at the club (as he still fondly called it), and the Saturday following Tressle had made a coffin for him; and Woolsey, with the undertaker by his side, followed to the grave the father of the "Kidneys."

Mrs. Crump was now alone in the world. "How alone?" says some innocent and respected reader. Ah! my dear sir, do you know so little of human nature as not to be aware that, one week after the

Richmond affair, Morgiana married Captain Walker? That did she privately, of course; and, after the ceremony, came tripping back to her parents, as young people do in plays, and said, "Forgive me, dear Pa and Ma, I'm married, and here is my husband, the Captain!" Papa and mamma did forgive her, as why shouldn't they? and papa paid over her fortune to her, which she carried home delighted to the Captain. This happened several months before the demise of old Crump; and Mrs. Captain Walker was on the Continent with her Howard when that melancholy event took place; hence Mrs. Crump's loneliness and unprotected condition. Morgiana had not latterly seen much of the old people; how could she, moving in her exalted sphere, receive at her genteel new residence in the Edgware Road, the old publican and his wife?

Being, then, alone in the world, Mrs. Crump could not abear, she said, to live in the house where she had been so respected and happy: so she sold the good-will of the "Bootjack," and, with the money arising from this sale and her own private fortune, being able to muster some sixty pounds per annum, retired to the neighbourhood of her dear old "Sadler's Wells," where she boarded with one of Mrs. Serle's forty pupils. Her heart was broken, she said; but nevertheless, about nine months after Mr. Crump's death, the wall-flowers, nasturtiums, polyanthuses and convolvuluses began to blossom under her bonnet as usual; in a year she was dressed quite as fine as ever, and now never missed "The Wells," or some other place of entertainment, one single night, but was as regular as the box-keeper. Nay, she was a buxom widow still, and an old flame of hers, Fisk, so celebrated as pantaloon in Grimaldi's time, but now doing the "heavy fathers" at "The Wells," proposed to her to exchange her name for his.

But this proposal the worthy widow declined altogether. To say truth, she was exceedingly proud of her daughter, Mrs. Captain Walker. They did not see each other much at first; but every now and then Mrs. Crump would pay a visit to the folks in Connaught Square; and on the days when "the Captain's" lady called in the City Road, there was not a single official at "The Wells," from the first tragedian down to the call-boy, who was not made aware of the fact.

It has been said that Morgiana carried home her fortune in her own reticule, and smiling placed the money in her husband's lap; and hence the reader may imagine, who knows Mr. Walker to be an extremely selfish fellow, that a great scene of anger must have taken

place, and many coarse oaths and epithets of abuse must have come from him, when he found that five hundred pounds was all that his wife had, although he had expected five thousand with her. But, to say the truth, Walker was at this time almost in love with his handsome, rosy, good-humoured, simple wife. They had made a fortnight's tour, during which they had been exceedingly happy; and there was something so frank and touching in the way in which the kind creature flung her all into his lap, saluting him with a hearty embrace at the same time, and wishing that it were a thousand billion billion times more, so that her darling Howard might enjoy it, that the man would have been a ruffian indeed could he have found it in his heart to be angry with her; and so he kissed her in return, and patted her on the shining ringlets, and then counted over the notes with rather a disconsolate air, and ended by locking them up in his portfolio. In fact, *she* had never deceived him; Eglantine had, and he in return had out-tricked Eglantine; and so warm were his affections for Morgiana at this time, that, upon my word and honour, I don't think he repented of his bargain. Besides, five hundred pounds in crisp bank-notes was a sum of money such as the Captain was not in the habit of handling every day; a dashing, sanguine fellow, he fancied there was no end to it, and already thought of a dozen ways by which it should increase and multiply into a plum. Woe is me! Has not many a simple soul examined five new hundred-pound notes in this way, and calculated their powers of duration and multiplication.

This subject, however, is too painful to be dwelt on. Let us hear what Walker did with his money. Why, he furnished the house in the Edgware Road before mentioned, he ordered a handsome service of plate, he sported a phaeton and two ponies, he kept a couple of smart maids and a groom foot-boy,—in fact, he mounted just such a neat, unpretending, gentlemanlike establishment as becomes a respectable young couple on their outset in life. "I've sown my wild oats," he would say to his acquaintances; "a few years since, perhaps, I would have longed to cut a dash, but now prudence is the word; and I've settled every farthing of Mrs. Walker's fifteen thousand on herself." And the best proof that the world had confidence in him is the fact, that for the articles of plate, equipage, and furniture, which have been mentioned as being in his possession, he did not pay one single shilling; and so prudent was he, that but for turnpikes, postage-stamps, and king's taxes, he hardly had occasion to change a five-pound note of his wife's fortune.

To tell the truth, Mr. Walker had determined to make his fortune. And what is easier in London? Is not the share-market open to all? Do not Spanish and Columbian bonds rise and fall? For what are companies invented but to place thousands in the pockets of shareholders and directors? Into these commercial pursuits the gallant Captain now plunged with great energy, and made some brilliant hits at first starting, and bought and sold so opportunely, that his name began to rise in the City as a capitalist, and might be seen in the printed list of directors of many excellent and philanthropic schemes, of which there is never any lack in London. Business to the amount of thousands was done at his agency; shares of vast value were bought and sold under his management. How poor Mr. Eglantine used to hate him and envy him, as from the door of his emporium (the firm was Eglantine and Mossrose now) he saw the Captain daily arrive in his pony-phaeton, and heard of the start he had taken in life.

The only regret Mrs. Walker had was that she did not enjoy enough of her husband's society. His business called him away all day; his business, too, obliged him to leave her of evenings very frequently alone; whilst he (always in pursuit of business) was dining with his great friends at the club, and drinking claret and champagne to the same end.

She was a perfectly good-natured and simple soul, and never made him a single reproach; but when he could pass an evening at home with her she was delighted, and when he could drive with her in the Park she was happy for a week after. On these occasions, and in the fulness of her heart, she would drive to her mother and tell her story. "Howard drove with me in the Park yesterday, mamma;" "Howard has promised to take me to the Opera," and so forth. And that evening the manager, Mr. Gawler, the first tragedian, Mrs. Serle and her forty pupils, all the box-keepers, bonnet-women—nay, the ginger-beer girls themselves at "The Wells," knew that Captain and Mrs. Walker were at Kensington Gardens, or were to have the Marchioness of Billingsgate's box at the Opera. One night—O joy of joys!—Mrs. Captain Walker appeared in a private box at "The Wells." That's she with the black ringlets and Cashmere shawl, smelling-bottle, and black-velvet gown, and bird of paradise in her hat. Goodness gracious! how they all acted at her, Gawler and all, and how happy Mrs. Crump was! She kissed her daughter between all the acts, she nodded to all her friends on the stage, in the slips, or in the real water; she introduced her daughter, Mrs. Captain Walker, to the

box-opener; and Melvil Delamere (the first comic), Canterfield (the tyrant), and Jonesini (the celebrated Fontarabian Statuesque), were all on the steps, and shouted for Mrs. Captain Walker's carriage, and waved their hats, and bowed as the little pony-phaeton drove away. Walker, in his moustaches, had come in at the end of the play, and was not a little gratified by the compliments paid to himself and lady.

Among the other articles of luxury with which the Captain furnished his house we must not omit to mention an extremely grand piano, which occupied four-fifths of Mrs. Walker's little back drawing-room, and at which she was in the habit of practising continually. All day and all night during Walker's absences (and these occurred all night and all day) you might hear—the whole street might hear—the voice of the lady at No. 23 gurgling, and shaking, and quavering, as ladies do when they practise. The street did not approve of the continuance of the noise; but neighbours are difficult to please, and what would Morgiana have had to do if she had ceased to sing? It would be hard to lock a blackbird in a cage and prevent him from singing too. And so Walker's blackbird, in the snug little cage in the Edgware Road, sang and was not unhappy.

After the pair had been married for about a year, the omnibus that passes both by Mrs. Crump's house near "The Wells," and by Mrs. Walker's street off the Edgware Road, brought up the former-named lady almost every day to her daughter. She came when the Captain had gone to his business; she stayed to a two-o'clock dinner with Morgiana, she drove with her in the pony-carriage round the Park, but she never stopped later than six. Had she not to go to the play at seven? And, besides, the Captain *might* come home with some of his great friends, and he always swore and grumbled much if he found his mother-in-law on the premises. As for Morgiana, she was one of those women who encourage despotism in husbands. What the husband says must be right, because he says it; what he orders must be obeyed tremblingly. Mrs. Walker gave up her entire reason to her lord. Why was it? Before marriage she had been an independent little person; she had far more brains than her Howard. I think it must have been his moustaches that frightened her, and caused in her this humility.

Selfish husbands have this advantage in maintaining with easy-minded wives a rigid and inflexible behaviour, viz., that if they *do* by any chance grant a little favour, the ladies receive it with such transports of gratitude as they would never think of showing to a lord and

master who was accustomed to give them everything they asked for; and hence, when Captain Walker signified his assent to his wife's prayer that she should take a singing-master, she thought his generosity almost divine, and fell upon her mamma's neck, when that lady came the next day, and said what a dear adorable angel her Howard was, and what ought she not to do for a man who had taken her from her humble situation, and raised her to be what she was! What she was, poor soul! She was the wife of a swindling *parvenu* gentleman. She received visits from six ladies of her husband's acquaintances,—two attorneys' ladies, his bill-broker's lady, and one or two more, of whose characters we had best, if you please, say nothing; and she thought it an honour to be so distinguished: as if Walker had been a Lord Exeter to marry a humble maiden, or a noble prince to fall in love with a humble Cinderella, or a majestic Jove to come down from heaven and woo a Semele. Look through the world, respectable reader, and among your honourable acquaintances, and say if this sort of faith in women is not very frequent? They *will* believe in their husbands, whatever the latter do. Let John be dull, ugly, vulgar, and a humbug, his Mary Ann never finds it out; let him tell his stories ever so many times, there is she always ready with her kind smile; let him be stingy, she says he is prudent; let him quarrel with his best friend, she says he is always in the right; let him be prodigal, she says he is generous, and that his health requires enjoyment; let him be idle, he must have relaxation; and she will pinch herself and her household that he may have a guinea for his club. Yes; and every morning, as she wakes and looks at the face, snoring on the pillow by her side—every morning, I say, she blesses that dull, ugly countenance, and the dull ugly soul reposing there, and thinks both are something divine. I want to know how it is that women do not find out their husbands to be humbugs? Nature has so provided it, and thanks to her. When last year they were acting the "Midsummer Night's Dream," and all the boxes began to roar with great coarse heehaws at Titania hugging Bottom's long long ears—to me, considering these things, it seemed that there were a hundred other male brutes squatted round about, and treated just as reasonably as Bottom was. Their Titanias lulled them to sleep in their laps, summoned a hundred smiling, delicate, household fairies to tickle their gross intellects and minister to their vulgar pleasures; and (as the above remarks are only supposed to apply to honest women loving their own lawful spouses) a mercy it is that no wicked Puck is in the way to open their eyes, and point out their folly. *Cui bono?* let them live on in their deceit: I know two lovely ladies

who will read this, and will say it is just very likely, and not see in the least that it has been written regarding *them.*

Another point of sentiment, and one curious to speculate on. Have you not remarked the immense works of art that women get through? The worsted-work sofas, the counterpanes patched or knitted (but these are among the old-fashioned in the country), the bushels of pincushions, the albums they laboriously fill, the tremendous pieces of music they practise, the thousand other fiddle-faddles which occupy the attention of the dear souls—nay, have we not seen them seated of evenings in a squad or company, Louisa employed at the worsted-work before mentioned, Eliza at the pincushions, Amelia at card-racks or filagree matches, and, in the midst, Theodosia with one of the candles, reading out a novel aloud? Ah! my dear sir, mortal creatures must be very hard put to it for amusement, be sure of that, when they are forced to gather together in a company and hear novels read aloud! They only do it because they can't help it, depend upon it: it is a sad life, a poor pastime. Mr. Dickens, in his American book, tells of the prisoners at the silent prison, how they had ornamented their rooms, some of them with a frightful prettiness and elaboration. Women's fancy-work is of this sort often—only prison work, done because there was no other exercising-ground for their poor little thoughts and fingers; and hence these wonderful pincushions are executed, these counterpanes woven, these sonatas learned. By everything sentimental, when I see two kind, innocent, fresh-cheeked young women go to a piano, and sit down opposite to it upon two chairs piled with more or less music-books (according to their convenience), and, so seated, go through a set of double-barrelled variations upon this or that tune by Herz or Kalkbrenner,—I say, far from receiving any satisfaction at the noise made by the performance, my too susceptible heart is given up entirely to bleeding for the performers. What hours, and weeks, nay, preparatory years of study, has that infernal jig cost them! What sums has papa paid, what scoldings has mamma administered ("Lady Bullblock does not play herself;" Sir Thomas says, "but she has naturally the finest ear for music ever known!"); what evidences of slavery, in a word, are there! It is the condition of the young lady's existence. She breakfasts at eight, she does "Mangnall's Questions" with the governess till ten, she practises till one, she walks in the square with bars round her till two, then she practises again, then she sews or hems, or reads French, or Hume's "History," then she comes down to play to papa, because he likes music whilst he is asleep after dinner, and then it is bed-time, and the morrow is another day with what are called the same

"duties" to be gone through. A friend of mine went to call at a nobleman's house the other day, and one of the young ladies of the house came into the room with a tray on her head; this tray was to give Lady Maria a graceful carriage. *Mon Dieu!* and who knows but at that moment Lady Bell was at work with a pair of her dumb namesakes, and Lady Sophy lying flat on a stretching-board? I could write whole articles on this theme: but peace! we are keeping Mrs. Walker waiting all the while.

Well, then, if the above disquisitions have anything to do with the story, as no doubt they have, I wish it to be understood that, during her husband's absence, and her own solitary confinement, Mrs. Howard Walker bestowed a prodigious quantity of her time and energy on the cultivation of her musical talent; and having, as before stated, a very fine loud voice, speedily attained no ordinary skill in the use of it. She first had for teacher little Podmore, the fat chorus-master at "The Wells," and who had taught her mother the "Tink-a-tink" song which has been such a favourite since it first appeared. He grounded her well, and bade her eschew the singing of all those "Eagle Tavern" ballads in which her heart formerly delighted; and when he had brought her to a certain point of skill, the honest little chorus-master said she should have a still better instructor, and wrote a note to Captain Walker (inclosing his own little account), speaking in terms of the most flattering encomium of his lady's progress, and recommending that she should take lessons of the celebrated Baroski. Captain Walker dismissed Podmore then, and engaged Signor Baroski, at a vast expense; as he did not fail to tell his wife. In fact, he owed Baroski no less than two hundred and twenty guineas when he was . . . But we are advancing matters.

Little Baroski is the author of the opera of "Eliogabalo," of the oratorio of "Purgatorio," which made such an immense sensation, of songs and ballet-musics innumerable. He is a German by birth, and shows such an outrageous partiality for pork and sausages, and attends at church so constantly, that I am sure there cannot be any foundation in the story that he is a member of the ancient religion. He is a fat little man, with a hooked nose and jetty whiskers, and coal-black shining eyes, and plenty of rings and jewels on his fingers and about his person, and a very considerable portion of his shirt-sleeves turned over his coat to take the air. His great hands (which can sprawl over half a piano, and produce those effects on the instrument for which he is celebrated) are encased in lemon-coloured kids, new, or cleaned daily. Parenthetically, let us ask why so many men, with coarse red

wrists and big hands, persist in the white kid glove and wristband system? Baroski's gloves alone must cost him a little fortune; only he says with a leer, when asked the question, "Get along vid you; don't you know dere is a gloveress that lets me have dem very sheap?" He rides in the Park; has splendid lodgings in Dover Street; and is a member of the "Regent Club," where he is a great source of amusement to the members, to whom he tells astonishing stories of his successes with the ladies, and for whom he has always play and opera tickets in store. His eye glistens and his little heart beats when a lord speaks to him; and he has been known to spend large sums of money in giving treats to young sprigs of fashion at Richmond and elsewhere. "In my bolyticks," he says, "I am consarevatiff to de bag-bone." In fine, he is a puppy, and withal a man of considerable genius in his profession.

This gentleman then undertook to complete the musical education of Mrs. Walker. He expressed himself at once "enshanted vid her gababilities," found that the extent of her voice was "brodigious," and guaranteed that she should become a first-rate singer. The pupil was apt, the master was exceedingly skilful; and, accordingly, Mrs. Walker's progress was very remarkable: although, for her part, honest Mrs. Crump, who used to attend her daughter's lessons, would grumble not a little at the new system, and the endless exercises which she, Morgiana, was made to go through. It was very different in *her* time, she said. Incledon knew no music, and who could sing so well now? Give her a good English ballad; it was a thousand times sweeter than your "Figaros" and "Semiramides."

In spite of these objections, however, and with amazing perseverance and cheerfulness, Mrs. Walker pursued the method of study pointed out to her by her master. As soon as her husband went to the City in the morning her operations began; if he remained away at dinner, her labours still continued: nor is it necessary for me to particularise her course of study, nor, indeed, possible; for, between ourselves, none of the male Fitz-Boodles ever could sing a note, and the jargon of scales and solfeggios is quite unknown to me. But as no man can have seen persons addicted to music without remarking the prodigious energies they display in the pursuit, as there is no father of daughters, however ignorant, but is aware of the piano-rattling and voice-exercising which go on in his house from morning till night, so let all fancy, without further inquiry, how the heroine of our story was at this stage of her existence occupied.

Walker was delighted with her progress, and did everything but

pay Baroski, her instructor. We know why he didn't pay. It was his nature not to pay bills, except on extreme compulsion; but why did not Baroski employ that extreme compulsion? Because, if he had received his money, he would have lost his pupil, and because he loved his pupil more than money. Rather than lose her, he would have given her a guinea as well as her *cachet*. He would sometimes disappoint a great personage, but he never missed his attendance on *her;* and the truth must out, that he was in love with her, as Woolsey and Eglantine had been before.

"By the immortel Chofe!" he would say, "dat letell ding sents me mad vid her big ice! But only vait avile: in six veeks I can bring any voman in England on her knees to me; and you shall see vat I vill do vid my Morgiana." He attended her for six weeks punctually, and yet Morgiana was never brought down on her knees; he exhausted his best stock of "gomblimends," and she never seemed disposed to receive them with anything but laughter. And, as a matter of course, he only grew more infatuated with the lovely creature who was so provokingly good-humoured and so laughingly cruel.

Benjamin Baroski was one of the chief ornaments of the musical profession in London; he charged a guinea for a lesson of three-quarters of an hour abroad, and he had, furthermore, a school at his own residence, where pupils assembled in considerable numbers, and of that curious mixed kind which those may see who frequent these places of instruction. There were very innocent young ladies with their mammas, who would hurry them off trembling to the farther corner of the room when certain doubtful professional characters made their appearance. There was Miss Grigg, who sang at the "Foundling," and Mr. Johnson, who sang at the "Eagle Tavern," and Madame Fioravanti (a *very* doubtful character), who sang nowhere, but was always coming out at the Italian Opera. There was Lumley Limpiter (Lord Tweedledale's son), one of the most accomplished tenors in town, and who, we have heard, sings with the professionals at a hundred concerts; and with him, too, was Captain Guzzard of the Guards, with his tremendous bass voice, which all the world declared to be as fine as Porto's, and who shared the applause of Baroski's school with Mr. Bulger, the dentist of Sackville Street, who neglected his ivory and gold plates for his voice, as every unfortunate individual will do who is bitten by the music mania. Then among the ladies there were a half-score of dubious pale governesses and professionals with turned frocks and lank damp bandeaux of hair

under shabby little bonnets; luckless creatures these, who were parting with their poor little store of half-guineas to be enabled to say they were pupils of Signor Baroski, and so get pupils of their own among the British youths, or employment in the choruses of the theatres.

The prima donna of the little company was Amelia Larkins, Baroski's own articled pupil, on whose future reputation the eminent master staked his own, whose profits he was to share, and whom he had farmed, to this end, from her father, a most respectable sheriff's officer's assistant, and now, by his daughter's exertions, a considerable capitalist. Amelia is blonde and blue-eyed, her complexion is as bright as snow, her ringlets of the colour of straw, her figure——but why describe her figure? Has not all the world seen her at the Theatres Royal and in America under the name of Miss Ligonier?

Until Mrs. Walker arrived, Miss Larkins was the undisputed princess of the Baroski company—the Semiramide, the Rosina, the Tamina, the Donna Anna. Baroski vaunted her everywhere as the great rising genius of the day, bade Catalani look to her laurels, and questioned whether Miss Stephens could sing a ballad like his pupil. Mrs. Howard Walker arrived, and created, on the first occasion, no small sensation. She improved, and the little society became speedily divided into Walkerites and Larkinsians; and between these two ladies (as indeed between Guzzard and Bulger before mentioned, between Miss Brunck and Miss Horsman, the two contraltos, and between the chorus-singers, after their kind) a great rivalry arose. Larkins was certainly the better singer; but could her straw-coloured curls and dumpy high-shouldered figure bear any comparison with the jetty ringlets and stately form of Morgiana? Did not Mrs. Walker, too, come to the music-lesson in her carriage, and with a black velvet gown and Cashmere shawl, while poor Larkins meekly stepped from Bell Yard, Temple Bar, in an old print gown and clogs, which she left in the hall? "Larkins sing!" said Mrs. Crump, sarcastically; "I'm sure she ought; her mouth's big enough to sing a duet." Poor Larkins had no one to make epigrams in her behoof; her mother was at home tending the younger ones, her father abroad following the duties of his profession; she had but one protector, as she thought, and that one was Baroski. Mrs. Crump did not fail to tell Lumley Limpiter of her own former triumphs, and to sing him "Tink-a-tink," which we have previously heard, and to state how in former days she had been called the Ravenswing. And Lumley, on this hint, made a poem, in which he compared Morgiana's hair to the plumage of the Raven's wing, and

Larkinissa's to that of the canary; by which two names the ladies began soon to be known in the school.

Ere long, the flight of the Ravenswing became evidently stronger whereas that of the canary was seen evidently to droop. When Morgiana sang, all the room would cry "bravo;" when Amelia performed, scarce a hand was raised for applause of her, except Morgiana's own, and that the Larkinses thought was lifted in odious triumph, rather than in sympathy, for Miss L. was of an envious turn, and little understood the generosity of her rival.

At last, one day, the crowning victory of the Ravenswing came. In the trio of Baroski's own opera of "Eliogabalo," "Rosy lips and rosy wine," Miss Larkins, who was evidently unwell, was taking the part of the English captive, which she had sung in public concerts before royal dukes, and with considerable applause, and, from some reason, performed it so ill, that Baroski, slapping down the music on the piano in a fury, cried, "Mrs. Howard Walker, as Miss Larkins cannot sing to-day, will you favour us by taking the part of Boadicetta?" Mrs. Walker got up smilingly to obey—the triumph was too great to be withstood; and, as she advanced to the piano, Miss Larkins looked wildly at her, and stood silent for awhile, and, at last, shrieked out, "*Benjamin!*" in a tone of extreme agony, and dropped fainting down on the ground. Benjamin looked extremely red, it must be confessed, at being thus called by what we shall denominate his Christian name, and Limpiter looked round at Guzzard, and Miss Brunck nudged Miss Horsman, and the lesson concluded rather abruptly that day; for Miss Larkins was carried off to the next room, laid on a couch, and sprinkled with water.

Good-natured Morgiana insisted that her mother should take Miss Larkins to Bell Yard in her carriage, and went herself home on foot; but I don't know that this piece of kindness prevented Larkins from hating her. I should doubt if it did.

Hearing so much of his wife's skill as a singer, the astute Captain Walker determined to take advantage of it for the purpose of increasing his "connection." He had Lumley Limpiter at his house before long, which was, indeed, no great matter, for honest Lum would go anywhere for a good dinner, and an opportunity to show off his voice afterwards, and Lumley was begged to bring any more clerks in the Treasury of his acquaintance; Captain Guzzard was invited, and any officers of the Guards whom he might choose to bring; Bulger received occasional cards:—in a word, and after a short time, Mrs. Howard Walker's musical parties began to be considerably *suivies*.

Her husband had the satisfaction to see his rooms filled by many great personages ; and once or twice in return (indeed, whenever she was wanted, or when people could not afford to hire the first singers) she was asked to parties elsewhere, and treated with that killing civility which our English aristocracy knows how to bestow on artists. Clever and wise aristocracy ! It is sweet to mark your ways, and study your commerce with inferior men.

I was just going to commence a tirade regarding the aristocracy here, and to rage against that cool assumption of superiority which distinguishes their lordships' commerce with artists of all sorts : that politeness which, if it condescends to receive artists at all, takes care to have them altogether, so that there can be no mistake about their rank—that august patronage of art which rewards it with a silly flourish of knighthood, to be sure, but takes care to exclude it from any contact with its betters in society,—I was, I say, just going to commence a tirade against the aristocracy for excluding artists from their company, and to be extremely satirical upon them, for instance, for not receiving my friend Morgiana, when it suddenly came into my head to ask, was Mrs. Walker fit to move in the best society ?—to which query it must humbly be replied that she was not. Her education was not such as to make her quite the equal of Baker Street. She was a kind, honest, and clever creature ; but, it must be confessed, not refined. Wherever she went she had, if not the finest, at any rate the most showy gown in the room ; her ornaments were the biggest : her hats, toques, berets, marabouts, and other fallals, always the most conspicuous. She drops "h's" here and there. I have seen her eat peas with a knife (and Walker, scowling on the opposite side of the table, striving in vain to catch her eye) ; and I shall never forget Lady Smigsmag's horror when she asked for porter at dinner at Richmond, and began to drink it out of the pewter pot. It was a fine sight. She lifted up the tankard with one of the finest arms, covered with the biggest bracelets ever seen ; and had a bird of paradise on her head, that curled round the pewter disk of the pot as she raised it, like a halo. These peculiarities she had, and has still. She is best away from the genteel world, that is the fact. When she says that "The weather is so 'ot that it is quite debiliating ;" when she laughs, when she hits her neighbour at dinner on the side of the waistcoat (as she will if he should say anything that amuses her), she does what is perfectly natural and unaffected on her part, but what is not customarily done among polite persons, who can sneer at her odd manners and her vanity, but don't know the kindness, honesty, and simplicity

which distinguish her. This point being admitted, it follows, of course, that the tirade against the aristocracy would, in the present instance, be out of place—so it shall be reserved for some other occasion.

The Ravenswing was a person admirably disposed by nature to be happy. She had a disposition so kindly that any small attention would satisfy it; was pleased when alone: was delighted in a crowd; was charmed with a joke, however old; was always ready to laugh, to sing, to dance, or to be merry; was so tender-hearted that the smallest ballad would make her cry, and hence was supposed, by many persons, to be extremely affected, and by almost all, to be a downright coquette. Several competitors for her favour presented themselves besides Baroski. Young dandies used to canter round her phaeton in the park, and might be seen haunting her doors in the mornings. The fashionable artist of the day made a drawing of her, which was engraved and sold in the shops; a copy of it was printed in a song, "Black-eyed Maiden of Araby," the words by Desmond Mulligan, Esq., the music composed and dedicated to MRS. HOWARD WALKER, by her most faithful and obliged servant, Benjamin Baroski; and at night her Opera-box was full. Her Opera-box? Yes, the heiress of the "Bootjack" actually had an Opera-box, and some of the most fashionable manhood of London attended it.

Now, in fact, was the time of her greatest prosperity; and her husband gathering these fashionable characters about him, extended his "agency" considerably, and began to thank his stars that he had married a woman who was as good as a fortune to him.

In extending his agency, however, Mr. Walker increased his expenses proportionably, and multiplied his debts accordingly. More furniture and more plate, more wines and more dinner-parties, became necessary; the little pony-phaeton was exchanged for a brougham of evenings; and we may fancy our old friend Mr. Eglantine's rage and disgust, as he looked up from the pit of the Opera, to see Mrs. Walker surrounded by what he called "the swell young nobs" about London, bowing to my lord, and laughing with his grace, and led to her carriage by Sir John.

The Ravenswing's position at this period was rather an exceptional one. She was an honest woman, visited by that peculiar class of our aristocracy who chiefly associate with ladies who are *not* honest. She laughed with all, but she encouraged none. Old Crump was constantly at her side now when she appeared in public, the most watchful of mammas, always awake at the Opera, though she seemed to be always asleep; but no dandy debauchee could deceive her vigilance, and for

this reason, Walker, who disliked her, (as every man naturally will, must, and should dislike his mother-in-law,) was contented to suffer her in his house to act as a *chaperon* to Morgiana.

None of the young dandies ever got admission of mornings to the little mansion in the Edgware Road; the blinds were always down; and though you might hear Morgiana's voice half across the Park as she was practising, yet the youthful hall-porter in the sugar-loaf buttons was instructed to deny her, and always declared that his mistress was gone out, with the most admirable assurance.

After some two years of her life of splendour, there were, to be sure, a good number of morning visitors, who came with *single* knocks, and asked for Captain Walker; but these were no more admitted than the dandies aforesaid, and were referred, generally, to the Captain's office, whither they went or not at their convenience. The only man who obtained admission into the house was Baroski, whose cab transported him thrice a week to the neighbourhood of Connaught Square, and who obtained ready entrance in his professional capacity.

But even then, and much to the wicked little music-master's disappointment, the dragon Crump was always at the piano with her endless worsted work, or else reading her unfailing *Sunday Times;* and Baroski could only employ "de langvitch of de ice," as he called it, with his fair pupil, who used to mimic his manner of rolling his eyes about afterwards, and perform "Baroski in love," for the amusement of her husband and her mamma. The former had his reasons for overlooking the attentions of the little music-master; and as for the latter, had she not been on the stage, and had not many hundreds of persons, in jest or earnest, made love to her? What else can a pretty woman expect, who is much before the public? And so the worthy mother counselled her daughter to bear these attentions with good humour, rather than to make them a subject of perpetual alarm and quarrel.

Baroski, then, was allowed to go on being in love, and was never in the least disturbed in his passion; and if he was not successful, at least the little wretch could have the pleasure of *hinting* that he was, and looking particularly roguish when the Ravenswing was named, and assuring his friends at the club, that "upon his vort dere vas no trut *in dat rebort.*"

At last one day it happened that Mrs. Crump did not arrive in time for her daughter's lesson (perhaps it rained, and the omnibus was full—a smaller circumstance than that has changed a whole life ere now)—Mrs. Crump did not arrive, and Baroski did, and Morgiana,

seeing no great harm, sat down to her lesson as usual, and in the midst of it down went the music-master on his knees, and made a declaration in the most eloquent terms he could muster.

"Don't be a fool, Baroski!" said the lady—(I can't help it if her language was not more choice, and if she did not rise with cold dignity, exclaiming, "Unband me, sir!")—"don't be a fool!" said Mrs. Walker, "but get up and let's finish the lesson."

"You hard-hearted adorable little greature, vil you not listen to me?"

"No, I vill not listen to you, Benjamin!" concluded the lady; "get up and take a chair, and don't go on in that ridiklous way, don't!"

But Baroski, having a speech by heart, determined to deliver himself of it in that posture, and begged Morgiana not to turn avay her divine hice, and to listen to de voice of his despair, and so forth; he seized the lady's hand, and was going to press it to his lips, when she said, with more spirit, perhaps, than grace,—

"Leave go my hand, sir; I'll box your ears if you don't!"

But Baroski wouldn't release her hand, and was proceeding to imprint a kiss upon it, and Mrs. Crump, who had taken the omnibus at a quarter past twelve instead of that at twelve, had just opened the drawing-room door and was walking in, when Morgiana, turning as red as a peony, and unable to disengage her left hand which the musician held, raised up her right hand, and, with all her might and main, gave her lover such a tremendous slap in the face as caused him abruptly to release the hand which he held, and would have laid him prostrate on the carpet but for Mrs. Crump, who rushed forward and prevented him from falling by administering right and left a whole shower of slaps, such as he had never endured since the day he was at school.

"What imperence!" said that worthy lady; "you'll lay hands on my daughter will you? (one, two). You'll insult a woman in distress, will you, you little coward? (one, two). Take that, and mind your manners, you filthy monster!"

Baroski bounced up in a fury. "By Chofe, you shall hear of dis!" shouted he; "you shall pay me dis!"

"As many more as you please, little Benjamin," cried the widow. "Augustus" (to the page), "was that the Captain's knock?" At this Baroski made for his hat. "Augustus, show this imperence to the door, and if he tries to come in again, call a policeman: do you hear?"

The music-master vanished very rapidly, and the two ladies, instead of being frightened or falling into hysterics as their betters would have

done, laughed at the odious monster's discomfiture, as they called him. "Such a man as that set himself up against my Howard!" said Morgiana, with becoming pride; but it was agreed between them that Howard should know nothing of what had occurred, for fear of quarrels, or lest he should be annoyed. So when he came home not a word was said; and only that his wife met him with more warmth than usual, you could not have guessed that anything extraordinary had occurred. It is not my fault that my heroine's sensibilities were not more keen, that she had not the least occasion for sal-volatile or symptom of a fainting fit; but so it was, and Mr. Howard Walker knew nothing of the quarrel between his wife and her instructor, until . . . .

Until he was arrested next day at the suit of Benjamin Baroski for two hundred and twenty guineas, and, in default of payment, was conducted by Mr. Tobias Larkins to his principal's lock-up house in Chancery Lane.

CHAPTER V.

IN WHICH MR. WALKER FALLS INTO DIFFICULTIES, AND MRS. WALKER MAKES MANY FOOLISH ATTEMPTS TO RESCUE HIM.

I HOPE the beloved reader is not silly enough to imagine that Mr. Walker, on finding himself inspunged for debt in Chancery Lane, was so foolish as to think of applying to any of his friends (those great personages who have appeared every now and then in the course of this little history, and have served to give it a fashionable air). No, no; he knew the world too well: and that, though Billingsgate would give him as many dozen of claret as he could carry away under his belt, as the phrase is (I can't help it, Madam, if the phrase is not more genteel), and though Vauxhall would lend him his carriage, slap him on the back, and dine at his house; their lordships would have seen Mr. Walker depending from a beam in front of the Old Bailey rather than have helped him to a hundred pounds.

And why, forsooth, should we expect otherwise in the world? I observe that men who complain of its selfishness are quite as selfish as the world is, and no more liberal of money than their neighbours; and I am quite sure with regard to Captain Walker that he would have treated a friend in want exactly as he when in want was treated. There was only his lady who was in the least afflicted by his captivity; and as for the club, that went on, we are bound to say, exactly as it did on the day previous to his disappearance.

By the way, about clubs—could we not, but for fear of detaining the fair reader too long, enter into a wholesome dissertation here, on

the manner of friendship established in those institutions, and the noble feeling of selfishness which they are likely to encourage in the male race? I put out of the question the stale topics of complaint, such as leaving home, encouraging gormandising and luxurious habits, &c.; but look also at the dealings of club-men with one another. Look at the rush for the evening paper! See how Shiverton orders a fire in the dog-days, and Swettenham opens the windows in February. See how Cramley takes the whole breast of the turkey on his plate, and how many times Jenkins sends away his beggarly half-pint of sherry! Clubbery is organised egotism. Club intimacy is carefully and wonderfully removed from friendship. You meet Smith for twenty years, exchange the day's news with him, laugh with him over the last joke, grow as well acquainted as two men may be together —and one day, at the end of the list of members of the club, you read in a little paragraph by itself, with all the honours,

MEMBER DECEASED.

Smith, John, Esq.;

or he, on the other hand, has the advantage of reading your own name selected for a similar typographical distinction. There it is, that abominable little exclusive list at the end of every club-catalogue —you can't avoid it. I belong to eight clubs myself, and know that one year Fitz-Boodle, George Savage, Esq. (unless it should please fate to remove my brother and his six sons, when of course it would be Fitz-Boodle, Sir George Savage, Bart.), will appear in the dismal category. There is that list; down I must go in it:—the day will come, and I shan't be seen in the bow-window, some one else will be sitting in the vacant arm-chair: the rubber will begin as usual, and yet somehow Fitz will not be there. "Where's Fitz?" says Trumpington, just arrived from the Rhine. "Don't you know?" says Punter, turning down his thumb to the carpet. "You led the club, I think?" says Ruff to his partner (the *other* partner!), and the waiter snuffs the candles.

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I hope in the course of the above little pause, every single member of a club who reads this has profited by the perusal. He may belong, I say, to eight clubs, he will die and not be missed by any of the five

thousand members. Peace be to him; the waiters will forget him, and his name will pass away, and another great-coat will hang on the hook whence his own used to be dependent.

And this, I need not say, is the beauty of the club-institutions. If it were otherwise,—if, forsooth, we were to be sorry when our friends died, or to draw out our purses when our friends were in want, we should be insolvent, and life would be miserable. Be it ours to button up our pockets and our hearts; and to make merry—it is enough to swim down this life-stream for ourselves; if Poverty is clutching hold of our heels, or Friendship would catch an arm, kick them both off. Every man for himself, is the word, and plenty to do too.

My friend Captain Walker had practised the above maxims so long and resolutely as to be quite aware when he came himself to be in distress, that not a single soul in the whole universe would help him, and he took his measures accordingly.

When carried to Mr. Bendigo's lock-up house, he summoned that gentleman in a very haughty way, took a blank banker's cheque out of his pocket-book, and filling it up for the exact sum of the writ, orders Mr. Bendigo forthwith to open the door and let him go forth.

Mr. Bendigo, smiling with exceeding archness, and putting a finger covered all over with diamond rings to his extremely aquiline nose, inquired of Mr. Walker whether he saw anything green about his face? intimating by this gay and good-humoured interrogatory his suspicion of the unsatisfactory nature of the document handed over to him by Mr. Walker.

"Hang it, sir!" says Mr. Walker, "go and get the cheque cashed, and be quick about it. Send your man in a cab, and here's a half-crown to pay for it." The confident air somewhat staggers the bailiff, who asked him whether he would like any refreshment while his man was absent getting the amount of the cheque, and treated his prisoner with great civility during the time of the messenger's journey.

But as Captain Walker had but a balance of two pounds five and twopence (this sum was afterwards divided among his creditors, the law expenses being previously deducted from it), the bankers of course declined to cash the Captain's draft for two hundred and odd pounds, simply writing the words "no effects" on the paper; on receiving which reply Walker, far from being cast down, burst out laughing very gaily, produced a real five-pound note, and called upon his host for a bottle of champagne, which the two worthies drank in perfect friendship and good-humour. The bottle was scarcely finished, and the young Israelitish gentleman who acts as waiter in Cursitor Street

had only time to remove the flask and the glasses, when poor Morgiana with a flood of tears rushed into her husband's arms, and flung herself on his neck, and calling him her "dearest, blessed Howard," would have fainted at his feet; but that he, breaking out in a fury of oaths, asked her how, after getting him into that scrape through her infernal extravagance, she dared to show her face before him? This address speedily frightened the poor thing out of her fainting fit—there is nothing so good for female hysterics as a little conjugal sternness, nay brutality, as many husbands can aver who are in the habit of employing the remedy.

"My extravagance, Howard?" said she, in a faint way; and quite put off her purpose of swooning by the sudden attack made upon her —"Surely, my love, you have nothing to complain of——"

"To complain of, ma'am?" roared the excellent Walker. "Is two hundred guineas to a music-master nothing to complain of? Did you bring me such a fortune as to authorise your taking guinea lessons? Haven't I raised you out of your sphere of life and introduced you to the best of the land? Haven't I dressed you like a duchess? Haven't I been for you such a husband as very few women in the world ever had, madam?—answer me that."

"Indeed, Howard, you were always very kind," sobbed the lady.

"Haven't I toiled and slaved for you,—been out all day working for you? Haven't I allowed your vulgar old mother to come to your house—to my house, I say? Haven't I done all this?"

She could not deny it, and Walker, who was in a rage (and when a man is in a rage, for what on earth is a wife made but that he should vent his rage on her?), continued for some time in this strain, and so abused, frightened, and overcame poor Morgiana that she left her husband fully convinced that she was the most guilty of beings, and bemoaning his double bad fortune, that her Howard was ruined and she the cause of his misfortunes.

When she was gone, Mr. Walker resumed his equanimity (for he was not one of those men whom a few months of the King's Bench were likely to terrify), and drank several glasses of punch in company with his host; with whom in perfect calmness he talked over his affairs. That he intended to pay his debt and quit the spunging-house next day is a matter of course; no one ever was yet put in a spunging-house that did not pledge his veracity he intended to quit it to-morrow. Mr. Bendigo said he should be heartily glad to open the door to him, and in the meantime sent out diligently to see among his friends if there were any more detainers against the

Captain, and to inform the Captain's creditors to come forward against him.

Morgiana went home in profound grief, it may be imagined, and could hardly refrain from bursting into tears when the sugar-loaf page asked whether master was coming home early, or whether he had taken his key; she lay awake tossing and wretched the whole night, and very early in the morning rose up, and dressed, and went out.

Before nine o'clock she was in Cursitor Street, and once more joyfully bounced into her husband's arms; who woke up yawning and swearing somewhat, with a severe headache, occasioned by the jollification of the previous night: for, strange though it may seem, there are perhaps no places in Europe where jollity is more practised than in prisons for debt; and I declare for my own part (I mean, of course, that I went to visit a friend) I have dined at Mr. Aminadab's as sumptuously as at Long's.

But it is necessary to account for Morgiana's joyfulness; which was strange in her husband's perplexity, and after her sorrow of the previous night. Well, then, when Mrs. Walker went out in the morning, she did so with a very large basket under her arm. "Shall I carry the basket, ma'am?" said the page, seizing it with much alacrity.

"No, thank you," cried his mistress, with equal eagerness: "it's only——"

"Of course, ma'am," replied the boy, sneering, "I knew it was that."

"Glass," continued Mrs. Walker, turning extremely red. "Have the goodness to call a coach, sir, and not to speak till you are questioned."

The young gentleman disappeared upon his errand: the coach was called and came. Mrs. Walker slipped into it with her basket, and the page went downstairs to his companions in the kitchen, and said "It's a comin'! master's in quod, and missus has gone out to pawn the plate." When the cook went out that day, she somehow had by mistake placed in her basket a dozen of table-knives and a plated egg-stand. When the lady's-maid took a walk in the course of the afternoon, she found she had occasion for eight cambric pocket-handkerchiefs (marked with her mistress's cipher), half-a-dozen pair of shoes, gloves, long and short, some silk stockings, and a gold-headed scent-bottle. "Both the new cashmeres is gone," said she, "and there's nothing left in Mrs. Walker's trinket-box but a paper of pins

and an old coral bracelet." As for the page, he rushed incontinently to his master's dressing-room and examined every one of the pockets of his clothes; made a parcel of some of them, and opened all the drawers which Walker had not locked before his departure. He only found three-half-pence and a bill-stamp, and about forty-five tradesmen's accounts, neatly labelled and tied up with red tape. These three worthies, a groom, who was a great admirer of Trimmer the lady's-maid, and a policeman, a friend of the cook's, sat down to a comfortable dinner at the usual hour, and it was agreed among them all that Walker's ruin was certain. The cook made the policeman a present of a china punch-bowl which Mrs. Walker had given her; and the lady's-maid gave her friend the "Book of Beauty" for last year, and the third volume of Byron's poems from the drawing-room table.

"I'm dash'd if she ain't taken the little French clock, too," said the page, and so indeed Mrs. Walker had; it slipped in the basket where it lay enveloped in one of her shawls, and then struck madly and unnaturally a great number of times, as Morgiana was lifting her store of treasures out of the hackney-coach. The coachman wagged his head sadly as he saw her walking as quick as she could under her heavy load, and disappearing round the corner of the street at which Mr. Balls' celebrated jewellery establishment is situated. It is a grand shop, with magnificent silver cups and salvers, rare gold-headed canes, flutes, watches, diamond brooches, and a few fine specimens of the old masters in the window, and under the words—

BALLS, JEWELLER,

you read, *Money Lent.*

in the very smallest type on the door.

The interview with Mr. Balls need not be described; but it must have been a satisfactory one, for at the end of half an hour Morgiana returned and bounded into the coach with sparkling eyes, and told the driver to *gallop* to Cursitor Street; which, smiling, he promised to do, and accordingly set off in that direction at the rate of four miles an hour. "I thought so," said the philosophic charioteer. "When a man's in quod, a woman don't mind her silver spoons;" and he was so delighted with her action, that he forgot to grumble when she came to settle accounts with him, even though she gave him only double his fare.

"Take me to him," said she to the young Hebrew who opened the door.

"To whom?" says the sarcastic youth; "there's twenty *hims* here. You're precious early."

"To Captain Walker, young man," replied Morgiana haughtily; whereupon the youth opening the second door, and seeing Mr. Bendigo in a flowered dressing-gown descending the stairs exclaimed, "Papa, here's a lady for the Captain." "I'm come to free him," said she, trembling and holding out a bundle of bank-notes. "Here's the amount of your claim, sir—two hundred and twenty guineas, as you told me last night." The Jew took the notes, and grinned as he looked at her, and grinned double as he looked at his son, and begged Mrs. Walker to step into his study and take a receipt. When the door of that apartment closed upon the lady and his father, Mr. Bendigo the younger fell back in an agony of laughter, which it is impossible to describe in words, and presently ran out into a court where some of the luckless inmates of the house were already taking the air, and communicated something to them which made those individuals also laugh as uproariously as he had previously done.

Well, after joyfully taking the receipt from Mr. Bendigo (how her cheeks flushed and her heart fluttered as she dried it on the blotting-book !), and after turning very pale again on hearing that the Captain had had a very bad night; "And well he might, poor dear!" said she (at which Mr. Bendigo, having no person to grin at, grinned at a marble bust of Mr. Pitt, which ornamented his side-board)—Morgiana, I say, these preliminaries being concluded, was conducted to her husband's apartment, and once more flinging her arms round her dearest Howard's neck, told him, with one of the sweetest smiles in the world, to make haste and get up and come home, for breakfast was waiting and the carriage at the door.

"What do you mean, love?" said the Captain, starting up and looking exceedingly surprised.

"I mean that my dearest is free; that the odious little creature is paid—at least the horrid bailiff is."

"Have you been to Baroski?" said Walker, turning very red.

"Howard!" said his wife, quite indignant.

"Did—did your mother give you the money?" asked the Captain.

"No; I had it by me," replies Mrs. Walker, with a very knowing look.

Walker was more surprised than ever. "Have you any more by you?" said he.

Mrs. Walker showed him her purse with two guineas; "That is all, love," she said. "And I wish," continued she, "you would give

me a draft to pay a whole list of little bills that have somehow all come in within the last few days."

"Well, well, you shall have the cheque," continued Mr. Walker, and began forthwith to make his toilet, which completed, he rung for Mr. Bendigo, and his bill, and intimated his wish to go home directly.

The honoured bailiff brought the bill, but with regard to his being free, said it was impossible.

"How impossible?" said Mrs. Walker, turning very red and then very pale. "Did I not pay just now?"

"So you did, and you've got the reshipt; but there's another detainer against the Captain for a hundred and fifty. Eglantine and Mossrose, of Bond Street;—perfumery for five years, you know."

"You don't mean to say you were such a fool as to pay without asking if there were any more detainers?" roared Walker to his wife.

"Yes she was though," chuckled Mr. Bendigo; "but she'll know better the next time: and, besides, Captain, what's a hundred and fifty pounds to you?"

Though Walker desired nothing so much in the world at that moment as the liberty to knock down his wife, his sense of prudence overcame his desire for justice: if that feeling may be called prudence on his part, which consisted in a strong wish to cheat the bailiff into the idea that he (Walker) was an exceedingly respectable and wealthy man. Many worthy persons indulge in this fond notion, that they are imposing upon the world; strive to fancy, for instance, that their bankers consider them men of property because they keep a tolerable balance, pay little tradesmen's bills with ostentatious punctuality, and so forth,—but the world, let us be pretty sure, is as wise as need be, and guesses our real condition with a marvellous instinct, or learns it with curious skill. The London tradesman is one of the keenest judges of human nature extant; and if a tradesman, how much more a bailiff? In reply to the ironic question, "What's a hundred and fifty pounds to you?" Walker, collecting himself, answers, "It is an infamous imposition, and I owe the money no more than you do; but, nevertheless, I shall instruct my lawyers to pay it in the course of the morning: under protest, of course."

"Oh, of course," said Mr. Bendigo, bowing and quitting the room, and leaving Mrs. Walker to the pleasure of a *tête-à-tête* with her husband.

And now being alone with the partner of his bosom, the worthy gentleman began an address to her which cannot be put down on paper here; because the world is exceedingly squeamish, and does

not care to hear the whole truth about rascals, and because the fact is that almost every other word of the Captain's speech was a curse, such as would shock the beloved reader were it put in print.

Fancy, then, in lieu of the conversation, a scoundrel disappointed and in a fury, wreaking his brutal revenge upon an amiable woman,

who sits trembling and pale, and wondering at this sudden exhibition of wrath. Fancy how he clenches his fists and stands over her, and stamps and screams out curses with a livid face, growing wilder and wilder in his rage ; wrenching her hand when she wants to turn away, and only stopping at last when she has fallen off the chair in a fainting fit, with a heart-breaking sob that made the Jew-boy who was listening at the key-hole turn quite pale and walk away. Well, it *is* best, perhaps, that such a conversation should not be told at length :—at the end of it, when Mr. Walker had his wife lifeless on the floor, he seized a water-jug and poured it over her ; which operation pretty soon brought her to herself, and shaking her black ringlets, she looked up once more again timidly into his face, and took his hand, and began to cry.

He spoke now in a somewhat softer voice, and let her keep paddling on with his hand as before ; he *couldn't* speak very fiercely to the poor girl in her attitude of defeat, and tenderness, and supplication. "Morgiana," said he, "your extravagance and carelessness have brought me to ruin, I'm afraid. If you'd chosen to have gone to Baroski, a word from you would have made him withdraw the writ, and my property wouldn't have been sacrificed, as it has now been, for nothing. It mayn't be yet too late, however, to retrieve ourselves. This bill of Eglantine's is a regular conspiracy, I am sure, between Mossrose and Bendigo here : you must go to Eglantine—he's an old —an old flame of yours, you know."

She dropped his hand ; "I can't go to Eglantine after what has passed between us," she said ; but Walker's face instantly began to wear a certain look, and she said with a shudder, "Well, well, dear, I *will* go." "You will go to Eglantine, and ask him to take a bill for the amount of this shameful demand—at any date, never mind what. Mind, however, to see him alone, and I'm sure if you choose you can settle the business. Make haste ; set off directly, and come back, as there may be more detainers in."

Trembling, and in a great flutter, Morgiana put on her bonnet and gloves, and went towards the door. "It's a fine morning," said Mr. Walker, looking out : "a walk will do you good ; and—Morgiana —didn't you say you had a couple of guineas in your pocket?"

"Here it is," said she, smiling all at once, and holding up her face to be kissed. She paid the two guineas for the kiss. Was it not a mean act? "Is it possible that people can love where they do not respect?" says Miss Prim : "*I* never would." Nobody asked you, Miss Prim : but recollect Morgiana was not born with your advantages

of education and breeding; and was, in fact, a poor vulgar creature, who loved Mr. Walker, not because her mamma told her, nor because he was an exceedingly eligible and well-brought-up young man, but because she could not help it, and knew no better. Nor is Mrs. Walker set up as a model of virtue: ah, no! when I want a model of virtue I will call in Baker Street, and ask for a sitting of my dear (if I may be permitted to say so) Miss Prim.

We have Mr. Howard Walker safely housed in Mr. Bendigo's establishment in Cursitor Street, Chancery Lane; and it looks like mockery and want of feeling towards the excellent hero of this story, (or, as should rather be said, towards the husband of the heroine,) to say what he *might* have been but for the unlucky little circumstance of Baroski's passion for Morgiana.

If Baroski had not fallen in love with Morgiana, he would not have given her two hundred guineas' worth of lessons; he would not have so far presumed as to seize her hand, and attempt to kiss it; if he had not attempted to kiss her, she would not have boxed his ears; he would not have taken out the writ against Walker; Walker would have been free, very possibly rich, and therefore certainly respected: he always said that a month's more liberty would have set him beyond the reach of misfortune.

The assertion is very likely a correct one; for Walker had a flashy, enterprising genius, which ends in wealth sometimes, in the King's Bench not seldom, occasionally, alas, in Van Diemen's Land! He might have been rich, could he have kept his credit, and had not his personal expenses and extravagances pulled him down. He had gallantly availed himself of his wife's fortune; nor could any man in London, as he proudly said, have made five hundred pounds go so far. He had, as we have seen, furnished a house, sideboard, and cellar with it: he had a carriage, and horses in his stable, and with the remainder he had purchased shares in four companies—of three of which he was founder and director, had conducted innumerable bargains in the foreign stocks, had lived and entertained sumptuously, and made himself a very considerable income. He had set up THE CAPITOL Loan and Life Assurance Company, had discovered the Chimborazo gold mines, and the Society for Recovering and Draining the Pontine Marshes; capital ten millions; patron HIS HOLINESS THE POPE. It certainly was stated in an evening paper that His Holiness had made him a Knight of the Spur, and had offered to him the rank of Count; and he was raising a loan for His Highness the Cacique of Panama, who has sent him (by way of dividend) the grand

cordon of his Highness's order of the Castle and Falcon, which might be seen any day at his office in Bond Street, with the parchments signed and sealed by the Grand Master and Falcon King-at-arms of his Highness. In a week more, Walker would have raised a hundred thousand pounds on his Highness's twenty per cent. loan; he would have had fifteen thousand pounds commission for himself; his companies would have risen to par, he would have realised his shares; he would have gone into Parliament; he would have been made a baronet, who knows? a peer, probably! "And I appeal to you, sir," Walker would say to his friends, "could any man have shown better proof of his affection for his wife, than by laying out her little miserable money as I did? They call me heartless, sir, because I didn't succeed; sir, my life has been a series of sacrifices for that woman, such as no man ever performed before."

A proof of Walker's dexterity and capability for business may be seen in the fact that he had actually appeased and reconciled one of his bitterest enemies—our honest friend Eglantine. After Walker's marriage, Eglantine, who had now no mercantile dealings with his former agent, became so enraged with him, that, as the only means of revenge in his power, he sent him in his bill for goods supplied to the amount of one hundred and fifty guineas, and sued him for the amount. But Walker stepped boldly over to his enemy, and in the course of half-an-hour they were friends.

Eglantine promised to forego his claim; and accepted in lieu of it three 100*l.* shares of the ex-Panama stock, bearing 25 per cent., payable half-yearly at the house of Hocus Brothers, St. Swithin's Lane; three 100*l.* shares, and the *second* class of the order of the Castle and Falcon, with the riband and badge. "In four years, Eglantine, my boy, I hope to get you the Grand Cordon of the order," said Walker: "I hope to see you a KNIGHT GRAND CROSS, with a grant of a hundred thousand acres reclaimed from the Isthmus."

To do my poor Eglantine justice, he did not care for the hundred thousand acres—it was the star that delighted him:—ah! how his fat chest heaved with delight as he sewed on the cross and riband to his dress coat, and lighted up four wax candles and looked at himself in the glass. He was known to wear a great-coat after that—it was that he might wear the cross under it. That year he went on a trip to Boulogne. He was dreadfully ill during the voyage, but as the vessel entered the port he was seen to emerge from the cabin, his coat open, the star blazing on his chest; the soldiers saluted him as he walked the streets, he was called Monsieur le Chevalier, and when he went

home he entered into negotiations with Walker, to purchase a commission in his Highness's service. Walker said he would get him the nominal rank of Captain, the fees at the Panama *War Office* were five-and-twenty pounds, which sum honest Eglantine produced, and had his commission, and a pack of visiting cards printed as Captain Archibald Eglantine, K.C.F. Many a time he looked at them as they lay in his desk, and he kept the cross in his dressing-table, and wore it as he shaved every morning.

His Highness the Cacique, it is well known, came to England, and had lodgings in Regent Street, where he held a levee, at which Eglantine appeared in the Panama uniform, and was most graciously received by his Sovereign. His Highness proposed to make Captain Eglantine his aide-de-camp with the rank of Colonel, but the Captain's exchequer was rather low at that moment, and the fees at the "War Office" were peremptory. Meanwhile his Highness left Regent Street, was said by some to have returned to Panama, by others to be in his native city of Cork, by others to be leading a life of retirement in the New Cut, Lambeth; at any rate was not visible for some time, so that Captain Eglantine's advancement did not take place. Eglantine was somehow ashamed to mention his military and chivalric rank to Mr. Mossrose, when that gentleman came into partnership with him; and kept these facts secret, until they were detected by a very painful circumstance. On the very day when Walker was arrested at the suit of Benjamin Baroski, there appeared in the newspapers an account of the imprisonment of his Highness the Prince of Panama, for a bill owing to a licensed victualler in Ratcliff Highway. The magistrate to whom the victualler subsequently came to complain, passed many pleasantries on the occasion. He asked whether his Highness did not drink like a swan with two necks; whether he had brought any Belles savages with him from Panama, and so forth; and the whole court, said the report, "was convulsed with laughter, when Boniface produced a green and yellow riband with a large star of the order of the Castle and Falcon, with which his Highness proposed to gratify him, in lieu of paying his little bill."

It was as he was reading the above document with a bleeding heart that Mr. Mossrose came in from his daily walk to the City. "Vell, Eglantine," says he, "have you heard the newsh?"

"About his Highness?"

"About your friend Valker; he's arrested for two hundred poundsh!"

Eglantine at this could contain no more; but told his story of how

he had been induced to accept 300*l.* of Panama stock for his account against Walker, and cursed his stars for his folly.

"Vell, you've only to bring in another bill," said the younger perfumer; "swear he owes you a hundred and fifty pounds, and we'll have a writ out against him this afternoon."

And so a second writ was taken out against Captain Walker.

"You'll have his wife here very likely in a day or two," said Mr. Mossrose to his partner; "them chaps always sends their wives, and I hope you know how to deal with her."

"I don't value her a fig's hend," said Eglantine. "I'll treat her like the dust of the hearth. After that woman's conduct to me, I should like to see her have the haudacity to come here; and if she does, you'll see how I'll serve her."

The worthy perfumer was, in fact, resolved to be exceedingly hard-hearted in his behaviour towards his old love, and acted over at night in bed the scene which was to occur when the meeting should take place. Oh, thought he, but it will be a grand thing to see the proud Morgiana on her knees to me; and me a pointing to the door; and saying, "Madam, you've steeled this 'eart against you, you have;—bury the recollection of old times, of those old times when I thought my 'eart would have broke, but it didn't—no, 'earts are made of sterner stuff. I didn't die as I thought I should; I stood it, and live to see the woman I despised at my feet—ha, ha, at my feet!"

In the midst of these thoughts Mr. Eglantine fell asleep; but it was evident that the idea of seeing Morgiana once more, agitated him considerably, else why should he have been at the pains of preparing so much heroism? His sleep was exceedingly fitful and troubled; he saw Morgiana in a hundred shapes; he dreamed that he was dressing her hair; that he was riding with her to Richmond; that the horse turned into a dragon, and Morgiana into Woolsey, who took him by the throat and choked him, while the dragon played the key-bugle. And in the morning when Mossrose was gone to his business in the City, and he sat reading the *Morning Post* in his study, ah! what a thump his heart gave as the lady of his dreams actually stood before him!

Many a lady who purchased brushes at Eglantine's shop, would have given ten guineas for such a colour as his when he saw her. His heart beat violently, he was almost choking in his stays: he had been prepared for the visit, but his courage failed him now it had come. They were both silent for some minutes.

"You know what I am come for," at last said Morgiana from under her veil, but she put it aside as she spoke.

"I—that is—yes—it's a painful affair, mem," he said, giving one look at her pale face, and then turning away in a flurry. "I beg to refer you to Blunt, Hone, and Sharpus, my lawyers, mem," he added, collecting himself.

"I didn't expect this from *you*, Mr. Eglantine," said the lady, and began to sob.

"And after what's 'appened, I didn't expect a visit from *you*, mem. I thought Mrs. Capting Walker was too great a dame to visit poor Harchibald Eglantine (though some of the first men in the country *do* visit him). Is there anything in which I can oblige you, mem?"

"O heavens!" cried the poor woman; "have I no friend left? I never thought that you, too, would have deserted me, Mr. Archibald."

The "Archibald," pronounced in the old way, had evidently an effect on the perfumer; he winced and looked at her very eagerly for a moment. "What can I do for you, mem?" at last said he.

"What is this bill against Mr. Walker, for which he is now in prison?"

"Perfumery supplied for five years; that man used more 'air-brushes than any duke in the land, and as for Eau de Cologne he must have bathed himself in it. He hordered me about like a lord. He never paid me one shilling,—he stabbed me in my most vital part —but, ah! ah! never mind *that:* and I said I would be revenged, and I *am*."

The perfumer was quite in a rage again by this time, and wiped his fat face with his pocket-handkerchief, and glared upon Mrs. Walker with a most determined air.

"Revenged on whom? Archibald—Mr. Eglantine, revenged on me—on a poor woman whom you made miserable! You would not have done so once."

"Ha! and a precious way you treated me *once*," said Eglantine: "don't talk to me, mem, of *once*. Bury the recollection of once for hever! I thought my 'eart would have broke once, but no; 'earts are made of sterner stuff. I didn't die as I thought I should; I stood it —and I live to see the woman who despised me at my feet."

"Oh, Archibald!" was all the lady could say, and she fell to sobbing again: it was perhaps her best argument with the perfumer.

"Oh, Harchibald, indeed!" continued he, beginning to swell; "don't call me Harchibald, Morgiana. Think what a position you

might have held, if you'd chose : when, when—you *might* have called me Harchibald. Now it's no use," added he, with harrowing pathos; "but, though I've been wronged, I can't bear to see women in tears—tell me what I can do?"

"Dear, good Mr. Eglantine, send to your lawyers and stop this horrid prosecution—take Mr. Walker's acknowledgment for the debt. If he is free, he is sure to have a very large sum of money in a few days, and will pay you all. Do not ruin him—do not ruin me by persisting now. Be the old kind Eglantine you were."

Eglantine took a hand, which Morgiana did not refuse; he thought about old times. He had known her since childhood almost; as a girl he dandled her on his knee at the "Kidneys;" as a woman he had adored her,—his heart was melted.

"He did pay me in a sort of way," reasoned the perfumer with himself—"these bonds, though they are not worth much, I took 'em for better or for worse, and I can't bear to see her crying, and to trample on a woman in distress. Morgiana," he added, in a loud cheerful voice, "cheer up; I'll give you a release for your husband: I *will* be the old kind Eglantine I was."

"Be the old kind jackass you vash!" here roared a voice that made Mr. Eglantine start. "Vy, vat an old fat fool you are, Eglantine, to give up our just debts because a voman comes snivelling and crying to you—and such a voman, too!" exclaimed Mr. Mossrose, for his was the voice.

"Such a woman, sir?" cried the senior partner.

"Yes; such a woman—vy didn't she jilt you herself?—hasn't she been trying the same game with Baroski; and are you so green as to give up a hundred and fifty pounds because she takes a fancy to come vimpering here? I won't, I can tell you. The money's as much mine as it is yours, and I'll have it, or keep Walker's body, that's what I will."

At the presence of his partner, the timid good genius of Eglantine, which had prompted him to mercy and kindness, at once outspread its frightened wings and flew away.

"You see how it is, Mrs. W.," said he, looking down; "it's an affair of business—in all these here affairs of business Mr. Mossrose is the managing man; ain't you, Mr. Mossrose?"

"A pretty business it would be if I wasn't," replied Mossrose, doggedly. "Come, ma'am," says he, "I'll tell you vat I do: I take fifty per shent; not a farthing less—give me that, and out your husband goes."

"Oh, sir, Howard will pay you in a week."

"Vell, den let him stop at my uncle Bendigo's for a week, and come out den—he's very comfortable there," said Shylock with a grin. "Hadn't you better go to the shop, Mr. Eglantine," continued he, "and look after your business? Mrs. Walker can't want you to listen to her all day."

Eglantine was glad of the excuse, and slunk out of the studio; not into the shop, but into his parlour; where he drank off a great glass of Maraschino, and sat blushing and exceedingly agitated, until Mossrose came to tell him that Mrs. W. was gone, and wouldn't trouble him any more. But although he drank several more glasses of Maraschino, and went to the play that night, and to the cider-cellars afterwards, neither the liquor, nor the play, nor the delightful comic songs at the cellars, could drive Mrs. Walker out of his head, and the memory of old times, and the image of her pale weeping face.

Morgiana tottered out of the shop, scarcely heeding the voice of Mr. Mossrose, who said, "I'll take forty per shent" (and went back to his duty cursing himself for a soft-hearted fool for giving up so much of his rights to a puling woman). Morgiana, I say, tottered out of the shop, and went up Conduit Street, weeping, weeping with all her eyes. She was quite faint, for she had taken nothing that morning but the glass of water which the pastry-cook in the Strand had given her, and was forced to take hold of the railings of a house for support just as a little gentleman with a yellow handkerchief under his arm was issuing from the door.

"Good heavens, Mrs. Walker!" said the gentleman. It was no other than Mr. Woolsey, who was going forth to try a body-coat for a customer; "are you ill?—what's the matter? for God's sake come in!" and he took her arm under his, and led her into his back-parlour, and seated her, and had some wine and water before her in one minute, before she had said one single word regarding herself.

As soon as she was somewhat recovered, and with the interruption of a thousand sobs, the poor thing told as well as she could her little story. Mr. Eglantine had arrested Mr. Walker: she had been trying to gain time for him; Eglantine had refused.

"The hard-hearted, cowardly brute to refuse *her* anything!" said loyal Mr. Woolsey. "My dear," says he, "I've no reason to love your husband, and I know too much about him to respect him; but I love and respect *you*, and will spend my last shilling to serve you." At which Morgiana could only take his hand and cry a great deal

more than ever. She said Mr. Walker would have a great deal of money in a week, that he was the best of husbands, and she was sure Mr. Woolsey would think better of him when he knew him; that Mr. Eglantine's bill was one hundred and fifty pounds, but that Mr. Mossrose would take forty per cent, if Mr. Woolsey could say how much that was.

"I'll pay a thousand pound to do you good," said Mr. Woolsey, bouncing up; "stay here for ten minutes, my dear, until my return, and all shall be right, as you will see." He was back in ten minutes, and had called a cab from the stand opposite (all the coachmen there had seen and commented on Mrs. Walker's woe-begone looks), and they were off for Cursitor Street in a moment. "They'll settle the whole debt for twenty pounds," said he, and showed an order to that effect from Mr. Mossrose to Mr. Bendigo, empowering the latter to release Walker on receiving Mr. Woolsey's acknowledgment for the above sum.

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"There's no use paying it," said Mr. Walker, doggedly, "it would only be robbing you, Mr. Woolsey—seven more detainers have come in while my wife has been away. I must go through the court now; but," he added in a whisper to the tailor, "my good sir, my debts of *honour* are sacred, and if you will have the goodness to lend *me* the twenty pounds, I pledge you my word as a gentleman to return it when I come out of quod."

It is probable that Mr. Woolsey declined this; for, as soon as he was gone, Walker, in a tremendous fury, began cursing his wife for dawdling three hours on the road. "Why the deuce, ma'am, didn't you take a cab?" roared he, when he heard she had walked to Bond Street. "Those writs have only been in half an hour, and I might have been off but for you."

"Oh, Howard," said she, "didn't you take—didn't I give you my—my last shilling?" and fell back and wept again more bitterly than ever.

"Well, love," said her amiable husband, turning rather red, "never mind, it wasn't your fault. It is but going through the court. It is no great odds. I forgive you."

CHAPTER VI.

IN WHICH MR. WALKER STILL REMAINS IN DIFFICULTIES, BUT SHOWS GREAT RESIGNATION UNDER HIS MISFORTUNES.

HE exemplary Walker, seeing that escape from his enemies was hopeless, and that it was his duty as a man to turn on them and face them, now determined to quit the splendid though narrow lodgings which Mr. Bendigo had provided for him, and undergo the martyrdom of the Fleet. Accordingly, in company with that gentleman, he came over to her Majesty's prison, and gave himself into the custody of the officers there; and did not apply for the accommodation of the Rules (by which in those days the captivity of some debtors was considerably lightened), because he knew perfectly well that there was no person in the wide world who would give a security for the heavy sums for which Walker was answerable. What these sums were is no matter, and on this head we do not think it at all necessary to satisfy the curiosity of the reader. He may have owed hundreds—thousands, his creditors only can tell; he paid the dividend which has been formerly mentioned, and showed thereby his desire to satisfy all claims upon him to the uttermost farthing.

As for the little house in Connaught Square, when, after quitting her husband, Morgiana drove back thither, the door was opened by the page, who instantly thanked her to pay his wages; and in the drawing-room, on a yellow satin sofa, sat a seedy man (with a pot of porter beside him placed on an album for fear of staining the rosewood

table), and the seedy man signified that he had taken possession of the furniture in execution for a judgment debt. Another seedy man was in the dining-room, reading a newspaper and drinking gin; he informed Mrs. Walker that he was the representative of another judgment debt and of another execution :—"There's another on 'em in the kitchen," said the page, "taking an inwentory of the furniture; and he swears he'll have you took up for swindling, for pawning the plate."

"Sir," said Mr. Woolsey, for that worthy man had conducted Morgiana home—"sir," said he, shaking his stick at the young page, "if you give any more of your impudence I'll beat every button off your jacket:" and as there were some four hundred of these ornaments, the page was silent. It was a great mercy for Morgiana that the honest and faithful tailor had accompanied her. The good fellow had waited very patiently for her for an hour in the parlour or coffee-room of the lock-up house, knowing full well that she would want a protector on her way homewards; and his kindness will be more appreciated when it is stated that, during the time of his delay in the coffee-room, he had been subject to the entreaties, nay, to the insults of Cornet Fipkin of the Blues, who was in prison at the suit of Linsey, Woolsey, and Co., and who happened to be taking his breakfast in the apartment when his obdurate creditor entered it. The cornet (a hero of eighteen, who stood at least five feet three in his boots, and owed fifteen thousand pounds) was so enraged at the obduracy of his creditor that he said he would have thrown him out of the window but for the bars which guarded it; and entertained serious thoughts of knocking the tailor's head off, but that the latter, putting his right leg forward and his fists in a proper attitude, told the young officer to "come on;" on which the cornet cursed the tailor for a "snob," and went back to his breakfast.

The execution people having taken charge of Mr. Walker's house, Mrs. Walker was driven to take refuge with her mamma near "Sadler's Wells," and the Captain remained comfortably lodged in the Fleet. He had some ready money, and with it managed to make his existence exceedingly comfortable. He lived with the best society of the place, consisting of several distinguished young noblemen and gentlemen. He spent the morning playing at fives and smoking cigars; the evening smoking cigars and dining comfortably. Cards came after dinner; and, as the Captain was an experienced player, and near a score of years older than most of his friends, he was generally pretty successful: indeed if he had received all the money that was owed to him, he

might have come out of prison and paid his creditors twenty shillings in the pound—that is, if he had been minded to do so. But there is no use in examining into that point too closely, for the fact is, young Fipkin only paid him forty pounds out of seven hundred, for which he gave him I. O. U.'s; Algernon Deuceace not only did not pay him three hundred and twenty which he lost at blind hookey, but actually borrowed seven and sixpence in money from Walker, which has never been repaid to this day; and Lord Doublequits actually lost nineteen thousand pounds to him at heads and tails, which he never paid, pleading drunkenness and his minority. The reader may recollect a paragraph which went the round of the papers entitled, "*Affair of honour in the Fleet Prison.*—Yesterday morning (behind the pump in the second court) Lord D-bl-qu-ts and Captain H-w-rd W-lk-r (a near relative, we understand, of His Grace the Duke of N-rf-lk) had a hostile meeting and exchanged two shots. These two young sprigs of nobility were attended to the ground by Major Flush, who, by the way, is *flush* no longer, and Captain Pam, late of the —— Dragoons. Play is said to have been the cause of the quarrel, and the gallant Captain is reported to have handled the noble lord's nose rather roughly at one stage of the transactions." When Morgiana at "Sadler's Wells" heard these news, she was ready to faint with terror; and rushed to the Fleet Prison, and embraced her lord and master with her usual expansion and fits of tears: very much to that gentleman's annoyance, who happened to be in company with Pam and Flush at the time, and did not care that his handsome wife should be seen too much in the dubious precincts of the Fleet. He had at least so much shame about him, and had always rejected her entreaties to be allowed to inhabit the prison with him.

"It is enough," would he say, casting his eyes heavenward, and with a most lugubrious countenance—"it is enough, Morgiana, that *I* should suffer, even though your thoughtlessness has been the cause of my ruin. But enough of *that!* I will not rebuke you for faults for which I know you are now repentant; and I never could bear to see you in the midst of the miseries of this horrible place. Remain at home with your mother, and let me drag on the weary days here alone. If you can get me any more of that pale sherry, my love, do. I require something to cheer me in solitude, and have found my chest very much relieved by that wine. Put more pepper and eggs, my dear, into the next veal-pie you make me. I can't eat the horrible messes in the coffee-room here."

It was Walker's wish, I can't tell why, except that it is the wish of

a great number of other persons in this strange world, to make his wife believe that he was wretched in mind and ill in health; and all assertions to this effect the simple creature received with numberless tears of credulity: she would go home to Mrs. Crump, and say how her darling Howard was pining away, how he was ruined for *her*, and with what angelic sweetness he bore his captivity. The fact is, he bore it with so much resignation that no other person in the world could see that he was unhappy. His life was undisturbed by duns; his day was his own from morning till night; his diet was good, his acquaintances jovial, his purse tolerably well supplied, and he had not one single care to annoy him.

Mrs. Crump and Woolsey, perhaps, received Morgiana's account of her husband's miseries with some incredulity. The latter was now a daily visitor to "Sadler's Wells." His love for Morgiana had become a warm, fatherly, generous regard for her; it was out of the honest fellow's cellar that the wine used to come which did so much good to Mr. Walker's chest; and he tried a thousand ways to make Morgiana happy.

A very happy day, indeed, it was when, returning from her visit to the Fleet, she found in her mother's sitting-room her dear grand rosewood piano, and every one of her music-books, which the kind-hearted tailor had purchased at the sale of Walker's effects. And I am not ashamed to say that Morgiana herself was so charmed, that when, as usual, Mr. Woolsey came to drink tea in the evening, she actually gave him a kiss; which frightened Mr. Woolsey, and made him blush exceedingly. She sat down, and played him that evening every one of the songs which he liked—the *old* songs—none of your Italian stuff. Podmore, the old music-master, was there too, and was delighted and astonished at the progress in singing which Morgiana had made; and when the little party separated, he took Mr. Woolsey by the hand, and said, "Give me leave to tell you, sir, that you're a *trump*."

"That he is," said Canterfield, the first tragic; "an honour to human nature. A man whose hand is open as day to melting charity, and whose heart ever melts at the tale of woman's distress."

"Pooh, pooh, stuff and nonsense, sir," said the tailor; but, upon my word, Mr. Canterfield's words were perfectly correct. I wish as much could be said in favour of Woolsey's old rival, Mr. Eglantine, who attended the sale too, but it was with a horrid kind of satisfaction at the thought that Walker was ruined. He bought the yellow satin sofa before mentioned, and transferred it to what he calls his "sitting-room," where it is to this day, bearing many marks of the best bears'-grease.

Woolsey bid against Baroski for the piano, very nearly up to the actual value of the instrument, when the artist withdrew from competition; and when he was sneering at the ruin of Mr. Walker, the tailor sternly interrupted him by saying, "What the deuce are *you* sneering at? You did it, sir; and you're paid every shilling of your claim, ain't you?" On which Baroski turned round to Miss Larkins, and said, "Mr. Woolsey was a 'snop;'" the very word, though pronounced somewhat differently, which the gallant Cornet Fipkin had applied to him.

Well; so he *was* a snob. But, vulgar as he was, I declare, for my part, that I have a greater respect for Mr. Woolsey than for any single nobleman or gentleman mentioned in this true history.

It will be seen from the names of Messrs. Canterfield and Podmore that Morgiana was again in the midst of the widow Crump's favourite theatrical society; and this, indeed, was the case. The widow's little room was hung round with the pictures which were mentioned at the commencement of the story as decorating the bar of the "Bootjack;" and several times in a week she received her friends from "The Wells," and entertained them with such humble refreshments of tea and crumpets as her modest means permitted her to purchase. Among these persons Morgiana lived and sung quite as contentedly as she had ever done among the demireps of her husband's society; and, only she did not dare to own it to herself, was a great deal happier than she had been for many a day. Mrs. Captain Walker was still a great lady amongst them. Even in his ruin, Walker, the director of three companies, and the owner of the splendid pony-chaise, was to these simple persons an awful character; and when mentioned, they talked with a great deal of gravity of his being in the country, and hoped Mrs. Captain W. had good news of him. They all knew he was in the Fleet; but had he not in prison fought a duel with a viscount? Montmorency (of the Norfolk circuit) was in the Fleet too; and when Canterfield went to see poor Montey, the latter had pointed out Walker to his friend, who actually hit Lord George Tennison across the shoulders in play with a racket-bat; which event was soon made known to the whole green-room.

"They had me up one day," said Montmorency, "to sing a comic song, and give my recitations; and we had champagne and lobster-salad: *such* nobs!" added the player. "Billingsgate and Vauxhall were there too, and left college at eight o'clock."

When Morgiana was told of the circumstance by her mother, she hoped her dear Howard had enjoyed the evening, and was thankful

that for once he could forget his sorrows. Nor, somehow, was she ashamed of herself for being happy afterwards, but gave way to her natural good humour without repentance or self-rebuke. I believe, indeed, (alas! why are we made acquainted with the same fact regarding ourselves long after it is past and gone?)—I believe these were the happiest days of Morgiana's whole life. She had no cares except the pleasant one of attending on her husband, an easy, smiling temperament which made her regardless of to-morrow; and, add to this, a delightful hope relative to a certain interesting event which was about to occur, and which I shall not particularise further than by saying, that she was cautioned against too much singing by Mr. Squills, her medical attendant; and that widow Crump was busy making-up a vast number of little caps and diminutive cambric shirts, such as delighted *grandmothers* are in the habit of fashioning. I hope this is as genteel a way of signifying the circumstance which was about to take place in the Walker family as Miss Prim herself could desire. Mrs. Walker's mother was about to become a grandmother. There's a phrase! The *Morning Post*, which says this story is vulgar, I'm sure cannot quarrel with *that*. I don't believe the whole *Court Guide* would convey an intimation more delicately.

Well, Mrs. Crump's little grandchild was born, entirely to the dissatisfaction, I must say, of his father; who, when the infant was brought to him in the Fleet, had him abruptly covered up in his cloak again, from which he had been removed by the jealous prison door-keepers; why, do you think? Walker had a quarrel with one of them, and the wretch persisted in believing that the bundle Mrs. Crump was bringing to her son-in-law was a bundle of disguised brandy!

"The brutes!" said the lady; "and the father's a brute too," said she. "He takes no more notice of me than if I was a kitchenmaid, and of Woolsey than if he was a leg of mutton—the dear, blessed little cherub!"

Mrs. Crump was a mother-in-law; let us pardon her hatred of her daughter's husband.

The Woolsey compared in the above sentence both to a leg of mutton and a cherub, was not the eminent member of the firm of Linsey, Woolsey and Co., but the little baby, who was christened Howard Woolsey Walker, with the full consent of the father; who said the tailor was a deuced good fellow, and felt really obliged to him for the sherry, for a frock-coat which he let him have in prison, and for his kindness to Morgiana. The tailor loved the little boy with all his soul; he attended his mother to her churching, and the child

to the font ; and, as a present to his little godson on his christening, he sent two yards of the finest white kerseymere in his shop to make him a cloak. The Duke had had a pair of inexpressibles off that very piece.

House-furniture is bought and sold, music lessons are given, children are born and christened, ladies are confined and churched—time, in other words, passes,—and yet Captain Walker still remains in prison ! Does it not seem strange that he should still languish there between palisaded walls near Fleet Market, and that he should not be restored to that active and fashionable world of which he was an ornament ? The fact is, the Captain had been before the Court for the examination of his debts ; and the Commissioner, with a cruelty quite shameful towards a fallen man, had qualified his ways of getting money in most severe language, and had sent him back to prison again for the space of nine calendar months, an indefinite period, and until his accounts could be made up. This delay Walker bore like a philosopher, and, far from repining, was still the gayest fellow of the tennis-court, and the soul of the midnight carouse.

There is no use in raking up old stories, and hunting through files of dead newspapers, to know what were the specific acts which made the Commissioner so angry with Captain Walker. Many a rogue has come before the Court, and passed through it since then : and I would lay a wager that Howard Walker was not a bit worse than his neighbours. But as he was not a lord, and as he had no friends on coming out of prison, and had settled no money on his wife, and had, as it must be confessed, an exceedingly bad character, it is not likely that the latter would be forgiven him when once more free in the world. For instance, when Doublequits left the Fleet, he was received with open arms by his family, and had two-and-thirty horses in his stables before a week was over. Pam, of the Dragoons, came out, and instantly got a place as government courier,—a place found so good of late years (and no wonder, it is better pay than that of a colonel), that our noblemen and gentry eagerly press for it. Frank Hurricane was sent out as registrar of Tobago, or Sago, or Ticonderago ; in fact, for a younger son of good family it is rather advantageous to get into debt twenty or thirty thousand pounds ; you are sure of a good place afterwards in the colonies. Your friends are so anxious to get rid of you, that they will move heaven and earth to serve you. And so all the above companions of misfortune with Walker were speedily made comfortable ; but *he* had no rich parents; his old father was dead in York jail. How was he to start in the world again? What friendly hand was there to fill his pocket with gold, and his cup

with sparkling champagne? He was, in fact, an object of the greatest pity,—for I know of no greater than a gentleman of his habits without the means of gratifying them. He must live well, and he has not the means. Is there a more pathetic case? As for a mere low beggar—some labourless labourer, or some weaver out of place—don't let us throw away our compassion upon *them.* Psha! they're accustomed to starve. They *can* sleep upon boards, or dine off a crust; whereas a gentleman would die in the same situation. I think this was poor Morgiana's way of reasoning. For Walker's cash in prison beginning presently to run low, and knowing quite well that the dear fellow could not exist there without the luxuries to which he had been accustomed, she borrowed money from her mother, until the poor old lady was *à sec.* She even confessed, with tears, to Woolsey, that she was in particular want of twenty pounds, to pay a poor milliner, whose debt she could not bear to put in her husband's schedule. And I need not say she carried the money to her husband, who might have been greatly benefited by it,—only he had a bad run of luck at the cards; and how the deuce can a man help *that?*

Woolsey had repurchased for her one of the Cashmere shawls. She left it behind her one day at the Fleet prison, and some rascal stole it there; having the grace, however, to send Woolsey the ticket, signifying the place where it had been pawned. Who could the scoundrel have been? Woolsey swore a great oath, and fancied he knew; but if it was Walker himself (as Woolsey fancied, and probably as was the case) who made away with the shawl, being pressed thereto by necessity, was it fair to call him a scoundrel for so doing, and should we not rather laud the delicacy of his proceeding? He was poor; who can command the cards? but he did not wish his wife should know *how* poor: he could not bear that she should suppose him arrived at the necessity of pawning a shawl.

She who had such beautiful ringlets, of a sudden pleaded cold in the head, and took to wearing caps. One summer evening, as she and the baby and Mrs. Crump and Woolsey (let us say all four babies together) were laughing and playing in Mrs. Crump's drawing-room,—playing the most absurd gambols, fat Mrs. Crump, for instance, hiding behind the sofa, Woolsey chuck-chucking, cock-a-doodle-dooing, and performing those indescribable freaks which gentlemen with philoprogenitive organs will execute in the company of children,—in the midst of their play the baby gave a tug at his mother's cap; off it came—her hair was cut close to her head!

Morgiana turned as red as sealing-wax, and trembled very much;

Mrs. Crump screamed, "My child, where is your hair?" and Woolsey, bursting out with a most tremendous oath against Walker that would

send Miss Prim into convulsions, put his handkerchief to his face, and actually wept. "The infernal bubble-ubble-ackguard!" said he, roaring and clenching his fists.

As he had passed the Bower of Bloom a few days before, he saw Mossrose, who was combing out a jet-black ringlet, and held it up, as if for Woolsey's examination, with a peculiar grin. The tailor did not understand the joke, but he saw now what had happened. Morgiana had sold her hair for five guineas; she would have sold her arm had her husband bidden her. On looking in her drawers it was found she had sold almost all her wearing apparel; the child's clothes were all there, however. It was because her husband talked of disposing of a gilt coral that the child had, that she had parted with the locks which had formed her pride.

"I'll give you twenty guineas for that hair, you infamous fat coward," roared the little tailor to Eglantine that evening. "Give it up, or I'll kill you——"

"Mr. Mossrose! Mr. Mossrose!" shouted the perfumer.

"Vell, vatsh de matter, vatsh de row, fight avay, my boys; two to one on the tailor," said Mr. Mossrose, much enjoying the sport (for Woolsey, striding through the shop without speaking to him, had rushed into the studio, where he plumped upon Eglantine).

"Tell him about that hair, sir."

"That hair! Now keep yourself quiet, Mister Timble, and don't tink for to bully *me*. You mean Mrs. Valker's 'air? Vy, she sold it me."

"And the more blackguard you for buying it! Will you take twenty guineas for it?"

"No," said Mossrose.

"Twenty-five?"

"Can't," said Mossrose.

"Hang it; will you take forty? There!"

"I vish I'd kep it," said the Hebrew gentleman, with unfeigned regret. "Eglantine dressed it this very night."

"For Countess Baldenstiern, the Swedish Hambassador's lady," says Eglantine (his Hebrew partner was by no means a favourite with the ladies, and only superintended the accounts of the concern). "It's this very night at Devonshire 'Ouse, with four hostrich plumes, lappets, and trimmings. And now, Mr. Woolsey, I'll trouble you to apologise."

Mr. Woolsey did not answer, but walked up to Mr. Eglantine, and snapped his fingers so close under the perfumer's nose that the latter started back and seized the bell-rope. Mossrose burst out laughing, and the tailor walked majestically from the shop, with both hands stuck between the lappets of his coat.

"My dear," said he to Morgiana a short time afterwards, "you must not encourage that husband of yours in his extravagance, and

sell the clothes off your poor back, that he may feast and act the fine gentleman in prison."

"It is his health, poor dear soul!" interposed Mrs. Walker: "his chest. Every farthing of the money goes to the doctors, poor fellow!"

"Well, now listen: I am a rich man (it was a great fib, for Woolsey's income, as a junior partner of the firm, was but a small one); I can very well afford to make him an allowance while he is in the Fleet, and have written to him to say so. But if you ever give him a penny, or sell a trinket belonging to you, upon my word and honour I will withdraw the allowance, and, though it would go to my heart, I'll never see you again. You wouldn't make me unhappy, would you?"

"I'd go on my knees to serve you, and Heaven bless you," said the wife.

"Well, then, you must give me this promise." And she did. "And now," said he, "your mother, and Podmore, and I, have been talking over matters, and we've agreed that you may make a very good income for yourself; though, to be sure, I wish it could have been managed any other way; but needs must, you know. You're the finest singer in the universe."

"La!" said Morgiana, highly delighted.

"*I* never heard anything like you, though I'm no judge. Podmore says he is sure you will do very well, and has no doubt you might get very good engagements at concerts or on the stage; and as that husband will never do any good, and you have a child to support, sing you must."

"Oh! how glad I should be to pay his debts and repay all he has done for me," cried Mrs. Walker. "Think of his giving two hundred guineas to Mr. Baroski to have me taught. Was not that kind of him? Do you *really* think I should succeed?"

"There's Miss Larkins has succeeded."

"The little, high-shouldered, vulgar thing!" says Morgiana. "I'm sure I ought to succeed if *she* did."

"She sing against Morgiana?" said Mrs. Crump. "I'd like to see her, indeed! She ain't fit to snuff a candle to her."

"I dare say not," said the tailor, "though I don't understand the thing myself; but if Morgiana can make a fortune, why shouldn't she?"

"Heaven knows we want it, Woolsey," cried Mrs. Crump. "And to see her on the stage was always the wish of my heart:" and so it

had formerly been the wish of Morgiana ; and now, with the hope of helping her husband and child, the wish became a duty, and she fell to practising once more from morning till night.

One of the most generous of men and tailors who ever lived now promised, if further instruction should be considered necessary (though that he could hardly believe possible), that he would lend Morgiana any sum required for the payment of lessons ; and accordingly she once more betook herself, under Podmore's advice, to the singing school. Baroski's academy was, after the passages between them, out of the question, and she placed herself under the instruction of the excellent English composer Sir George Thrum, whose large and awful wife, Lady Thrum, dragon of virtue and propriety, kept watch over the master and the pupils, and was the sternest guardian of female virtue on or off any stage.

Morgiana came at a propitious moment. Baroski had launched Miss Larkins under the name of Ligonier. The Ligonier was enjoying considerable success, and was singing classical music to tolerable audiences, whereas Miss Butts, Sir George's last pupil, had turned out a complete failure, and the rival house was only able to make a faint opposition to the new star with Miss M'Whirter, who, though an old favourite, had lost her upper notes and her front teeth, and, the fact was, drew no longer.

Directly Sir George heard Mrs. Walker, he tapped Podmore, who accompanied her, on the waistcoat, and said, "Poddy, thank you; we'll cut the orange-boy's throat with that voice." It was by the familiar title of orange-boy that the great Baroski was known among his opponents.

"We'll crush him, Podmore," said Lady Thrum, in her deep hollow voice. "You may stop and dine." And Podmore stayed to dinner, and ate cold mutton, and drank Marsala with the greatest reverence for the great English composer. The very next day Lady Thrum hired a pair of horses, and paid a visit to Mrs. Crump and her daughter at "Sadler's Wells."

All these things were kept profoundly secret from Walker, who received very magnanimously the allowance of two guineas a-week which Woolsey made him, and with the aid of the few shillings his wife could bring him, managed to exist as best he might. He did not dislike gin when he could get no claret, and the former liquor, under the name of "tape," used to be measured out pretty liberally in what was formerly her Majesty's prison of the Fleet.

Morgiana pursued her studies under Thrum, and we shall hear in the next chapter how it was she changed her name to RAVENSWING.

CHAPTER VII.

IN WHICH MORGIANA ADVANCES TOWARDS FAME AND HONOUR, AND IN WHICH SEVERAL GREAT LITERARY CHARACTERS MAKE THEIR APPEARANCE.

"WE must begin, my dear madam," said Sir George Thrum, "by unlearning all that Mr. Baroski (of whom I do not wish to speak with the slightest disrespect) has taught you!"

Morgiana knew that every professor says as much, and submitted to undergo the study requisite for Sir George's system with perfect good grace. *Au fond*, as I was given to understand, the methods of the two artists were pretty similar; but as there was rivalry between them, and continual desertion of scholars from one school to another, it was fair for each to take all the credit he could get in the success of any pupil. If a pupil failed, for instance, Thrum would say Baroski had spoiled her irretrievably; while the German would regret "Dat dat yong voman, who had a good organ, should have trown away her dime wid dat old Drum." When one of these deserters succeeded, "Yes, yes," would either professor cry, "I formed her, she owes her fortune to me.' Both of them thus, in future days, claimed the education of the famous Ravenswing; and even Sir George Thrum, though he wished to *écraser* the Ligonier, pretended that her present success was his work because once she had been brought by her mother, Mrs. Larkins, to sing for Sir George's approval.

When the two professors met it was with the most delighted

cordiality on the part of both. "*Mein lieber Herr*," Thrum would say (with some malice), "your sonata in x flat is divine." "Chevalier," Baroski would reply, "dat andante movement in w is worthy of Beethoven. I gif you my sacred honour," and so forth. In fact, they loved each other as gentlemen in their profession always do.

The two famous professors conduct their academies on very opposite principles. Baroski writes ballet music; Thrum, on the contrary, says "he cannot but deplore the dangerous fascinations of the dance," and writes more for Exeter Hall and Birmingham. While Baroski drives a cab in the park with a very suspicious Mademoiselle Léocadie, or Aménaide, by his side, you may see Thrum walking to evening church with his lady, and hymns are sung there of his own composition. He belongs to the "Athenæum Club," he goes to the Levée once a year, he does everything that a respectable man should, and if, by the means of this respectability, he manages to make his little trade far more profitable than it otherwise would be, are we to quarrel with him for it?

Sir George, in fact, had every reason to be respectable. He had been a choir-boy at Windsor, had played to the old King's violoncello, had been intimate with him, and had received knighthood at the hand of his revered sovereign. He had a snuff-box which his Majesty gave him, and portraits of him and the young princes all over the house. He had also a foreign order (no other, indeed, than the Elephant and Castle of Kalbsbraten-Pumpernickel), conferred upon him by the Grand Duke when here with the allied sovereigns in 1814. With this ribbon round his neck, on gala days, and in a white waistcoat, the old gentleman looked splendid as he moved along in a blue coat with the Windsor button, and neat black small-clothes, and silk stockings. He lived in an old, tall, dingy house, furnished in the reign of George III., his beloved master, and not much more cheerful now than a family vault. They are awfully funereal those ornaments of the close of the last century,—tall, gloomy, horse-hair chairs, mouldy Turkey carpets, with wretched druggets to guard them, little cracked sticking-plaster miniatures of people in *tours* and pig-tails over high-shouldered mantelpieces two dismal urns on each side of a lanky sideboard, and in the midst a queer twisted receptacle for worn-out knives with green handles. Under the sideboard stands a cellaret that looks as if it held half a bottle of currant wine, and a shivering plate-warmer that never could get any comfort out of the wretched old cramped grate yonder. Don't you know in such houses the grey gloom that hangs over the stairs, the dull-coloured old carpet that winds its way up the same, growing

thinner, duller, and more threadbare, as it mounts to the bed-room floors? There is something awful in the bed-room of a respectable old couple of sixty-five. Think of the old feathers, turbans, bugles, petticoats, pomatum-pots, spencers, white satin shoes, false fronts, the old flaccid, boneless stays tied up in faded riband, the dusky fans, the old forty-years-old baby-linen, the letters of Sir George when he was young, the doll of poor Maria, who died in 1803, Frederick's first corduroy breeches, and the newspaper which contains the account of his distinguishing himself at the siege of Seringapatam. All these lie somewhere, damp and squeezed down into glum old presses and wardrobes. At that glass the wife has sat many times these fifty years; in that old morocco bed her children were born. Where are they now? Fred, the brave captain, and Charles, the saucy colleger; there hangs a drawing of him done by Mr. Beechey, and that sketch by Cosway was the very likeness of Louisa before . . .

"Mr. Fitz-Boodle! for Heaven's sake come down. What are you doing in a lady's bedroom?"

"The fact is, madam, I had no business there in life; but, having had quite enough wine with Sir George, my thoughts had wandered upstairs into the sanctuary of female excellence, where your ladyship nightly reposes. You do not sleep so well now as in old days, though there is no patter of little steps to wake you overhead."

They call that room the nursery still, and the little wicket still hangs at the upper stairs: it has been there for forty years—*bon Dieu!* Can't you see the ghosts of little faces peering over it? I wonder whether they get up in the night as the moonlight shines into the blank, vacant old room, and play there solemnly with little ghostly horses, and the spirits of dolls, and tops that turn and turn but don't hum.

Once more, sir, come down to the lower storey—that is, to the Morgiana story—with which the above sentences have no more to do than this morning's leading article in *The Times;* only it was at this house of Sir George Thrum's that I met Morgiana. Sir George, in old days, had instructed some of the female members of our family, and I recollect cutting my fingers as a child with one of those attenuated green-handled knives in the queer box yonder.

In those days Sir George Thrum was the first great musical teacher of London, and the royal patronage brought him a great number of fashionable pupils, of whom Lady Fitz-Boodle was one. It was a long, long time ago: in fact, Sir George Thrum was old enough to remember persons who had been present at Mr. Braham's

first appearance, and the old gentleman's days of triumph had been those of Billington and Incledon, Catalani and Madame Storace.

He was the author of several operas ("The Camel Driver," "Britons Alarmed; or the Siege of Bergen-op-Zoom," &c. &c.) and, of course, of songs which had considerable success in their day, but are forgotten now, and are as much faded and out of fashion as those old carpets which we have described in the professor's house, and which were, doubtless, very brilliant once. But such is the fate of carpets, of flowers, of music, of men, and of the most admirable novels —even this story will not be alive for many centuries. Well, well, why struggle against Fate?

But, though his hey-day of fashion was gone, Sir George still held his place among the musicians of the old school, conducted occasionally at the Ancient Concerts and the "Philharmonic," and his glees are still favourites after public dinners, and are sung by those old bacchanalians, in chestnut wigs, who attend for the purpose of amusing the guests on such occasions of festivity. The great old people at the gloomy old concerts before mentioned always pay Sir George marked respect; and, indeed, from the old gentleman's peculiar behaviour to his superiors, it is impossible they should not be delighted with him, so he leads at almost every one of the concerts in the old-fashioned houses in town.

Becomingly obsequious to his superiors, he is with the rest of the world properly majestic, and has obtained no small success by his admirable and undeviating respectability. Respectability has been his great card through life; ladies can trust their daughters at Sir George Thrum's academy. "A good musician, madam," says he to the mother of a new pupil, "should not only have a fine ear, a good voice, and an indomitable industry, but, above all, a faultless character —faultless, that is, as far as our poor nature will permit. And you will remark that those young persons with whom your lovely daughter, Miss Smith, will pursue her musical studies, are all, in a moral point of view, as spotless as that charming young lady. How should it be otherwise? I have been myself the father of a family; I have been honoured with the intimacy of the wisest and best of kings, my late sovereign George III., and I can proudly show an example of decorum to my pupils in my Sophia. Mrs. Smith, I have the honour of introducing to you my Lady Thrum."

The old lady would rise at this, and make a gigantic curtsey, such a one as had begun the minuet at Ranelagh fifty years ago, and, the introduction ended, Mrs. Smith would retire, after having seen the

portraits of the princes, his late Majesty's snuff-box, and a piece of music which he used to play, noted by himself—Mrs. Smith, I say, would drive back to Baker Street, delighted to think that her Frederica had secured so eligible and respectable a master. I forgot to say that, during the interview between Mrs. Smith and Sir George, the latter would be called out of his study by his black servant, and my Lady Thrum would take that opportunity of mentioning when he was knighted, and how he got his foreign order, and deploring the sad condition of *other* musical professors, and the dreadful immorality which sometimes arose in consequence of their laxness. Sir George was a good deal engaged to dinners in the season, and if invited to dine with a nobleman, as he might possibly be on the day when Mrs. Smith requested the honour of his company, he would write back "that he should have had the sincerest happiness in waiting upon Mrs. Smith in Baker Street, if, previously, my Lord Tweedledale had not been so kind as to engage him." This letter, of course, shown by Mrs. Smith to her friends, was received by them with proper respect; and thus, in spite of age and new fashions, Sir George still reigned pre-eminent for a mile round Cavendish Square. By the young pupils of the academy he was called Sir Charles Grandison; and, indeed, fully deserved this title on account of the indomitable respectability of his whole actions.

It was under this gentleman that Morgiana made her *début* in public life. I do not know what arrangements may have been made between Sir George Thrum and his pupil regarding the profits which were to accrue to the former from engagements procured by him for the latter; but there was, no doubt, an understanding between them. For Sir George, respectable as he was, had the reputation of being extremely clever at a bargain; and Lady Thrum herself, in her great high-tragedy way, could purchase a pair of soles or select a leg of mutton with the best housekeeper in London.

When, however, Morgiana had been for some six months under his tuition, he began, for some reason or other, to be exceedingly hospitable, and invited his friends to numerous entertainments; at one of which, as I have said, I had the pleasure of meeting Mrs. Walker.

Although the worthy musician's dinners were not good, the old knight had some excellent wine in his cellar, and his arrangement of his party deserves to be commended.

For instance, he meets me and Bob Fitz-Urse in Pall Mall, at whose paternal house he was also a visitor. "My dear young gentlemen," says he, "will you come and dine with a poor musical composer?

I have some comet-hock, and, what is more curious to you perhaps, as men of wit, one or two of the great literary characters of London whom you would like to see—quite curiosities, my dear young friends." And we agreed to go.

To the literary men he says, "I have a little quiet party at home, Lord Roundtowers, the Honourable Mr. Fitz-Urse of the Life Guards, and a few more. Can you tear yourself away from the war of wits, and take a quiet dinner with a few mere men about town?"

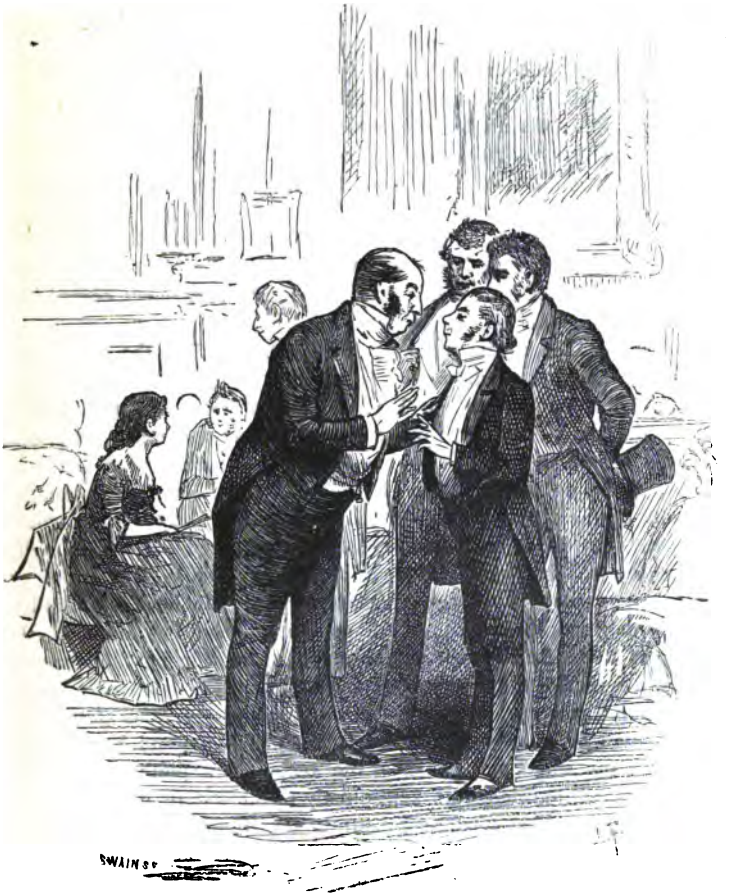
The literary men instantly purchase new satin stocks and white gloves, and are delighted to fancy themselves members of the world of fashion. Instead of inviting twelve Royal Academicians, or a dozen authors, or a dozen men of science to dinner, as his Grace the Duke of —— and the Right Honourable Sir Robert —— are in the habit of doing once a year, this plan of fusion is the one they should adopt. Not invite all artists, as they would invite all farmers to a rent-dinner; but they should have a proper commingling of artists and men of the world. There is one of the latter whose name is George Savage Fitz-Boodle, who——But let us return to Sir George Thrum.

Fitz-Urse and I arrive at the dismal old house, and are conducted up the staircase by a black servant, who shouts out, "Missa Fiss-Boodle—the *Honourable* Missa Fiss-Urse!" It was evident that Lady Thrum had instructed the swarthy groom of the chambers (for there is nothing particularly honourable in my friend Fitz's face that I know of, unless an abominable squint may be said to be so). Lady Thrum, whose figure is something like that of the shot-tower opposite Waterloo Bridge, makes a majestic inclination and a speech to signify her pleasure at receiving under her roof two of the children of Sir George's best pupils. A lady in black velvet is seated by the old fire-place, with whom a stout gentleman in an exceedingly light coat and ornamental waistcoat is talking very busily. "The great star of the night," whispers our host. "Mrs. Walker, gentlemen—the *Ravenswing!* She is talking to the famous Mr. Slang, of the —— theatre."

"Is she a fine singer?" says Fitz-Urse. "She's a very fine woman."

"My dear young friends, you shall hear to-night! I, who have heard every fine voice in Europe, confidently pledge my respectability that the Ravenswing is equal to them all. She has the graces, sir, of a Venus with the mind of a muse. She is a siren, sir, without the

dangerous qualities of one. She is hallowed, sir, by her misfortunes as by her genius; and I am proud to think that my instructions have



been the means of developing the wondrous qualities that were latent within her until now."

"You don't say so!" says gobemouche Fitz-Urse.

Having thus indoctrinated Mr. Fitz-Urse, Sir George takes another of his guests, and proceeds to work upon him, "My dear Mr. Bludyer, how do you do? Mr. Fitz-Boodle, Mr. Bludyer, the brilliant and

accomplished wit, whose sallies in the *Tomahawk* delight us every Saturday. Nay, no blushes my dear sir; you are very wicked, but oh! *so* pleasant. Well, Mr. Bludyer, I am glad to see you, sir, and hope you will have a favourable opinion of our genius, sir. As I was saying to Mr. Fitz-Boodle, she has the graces of a Venus with the mind of a muse. She is a siren, without the dangerous qualities of one," &c. This little speech was made to half-a-dozen persons in the course of the evening—persons, for the most part, connected with the public journals or the theatrical world. There was Mr. Squinny, the editor of the *Flowers of Fashion;* Mr. Desmond Mulligan, the poet, and reporter for a morning paper; and other worthies of their calling. For though Sir George is a respectable man, and as high-minded and moral an old gentleman as ever wore knee-buckles, he does not neglect the little arts of popularity, and can condescend to receive very queer company if need be.

For instance, at the dinner-party at which I had the honour of assisting, and at which, on the right hand of Lady Thrum, sat the *obligé* nobleman, whom the Thrums were a great deal too wise to omit (the sight of a lord does good to us commoners, or why else should we be so anxious to have one?). In the second place of honour, and on her ladyship's left hand, sat Mr. Slang, the manager of one of the theatres; a gentleman whom my Lady Thrum would scarcely, but for a great necessity's sake, have been induced to invite to her table. He had the honour of leading Mrs. Walker to dinner, who looked splendid in black velvet and turban, full of health and smiles.

Lord Roundtowers is an old gentleman who has been at the theatres five times a week for these fifty years, a living dictionary of the stage, recollecting every actor and actress who has appeared upon it for half a century. He perfectly well remembered Miss Delancy in Morgiana; he knew what had become of Ali Baba, and how Cassim had left the stage, and was now the keeper of a public-house. All this store of knowledge he kept quietly to himself, or only delivered in confidence to his next neighbour in the intervals of the banquet, which he enjoys prodigiously. He lives at an hotel: if not invited to dine, eats a mutton-chop very humbly at his club, and finishes his evening after the play at Crockford's, whither he goes not for the sake of the play but of the supper there. He is described in the *Court Guide* as of "Simmer's Hotel," and of Roundtowers, county Cork. It is said that the round towers really exist. But he has not been in Ireland since the rebellion; and his property is so hampered with ancestral mortgages, and rent-charges, and annuities, that his income

is barely sufficient to provide the modest mutton-chop before alluded to. He has, any time these fifty years, lived in the wickedest company in London, and is, withal, as harmless, mild, good-natured, innocent an old gentleman as can readily be seen.

"Roundy," shouts the elegant Mr. Slang, across the table, with a voice which makes Lady Thrum shudder, "Tuff, a glass of wine."

My lord replies meekly, "Mr. Slang, I shall have very much pleasure. What shall it be?"

"There is Madeira near you, my lord," says my lady, pointing to a tall thin decanter of the fashion of the year.

"Madeira! Marsala, by Jove, your ladyship means!" shouts Mr. Slang. "No, no, old birds are not caught with chaff. Thrum, old boy, let's have some of your comet-hock."

"My Lady Thrum, I believe that *is* Marsala," says the knight, blushing a little, in reply to a question from his Sophia. "Ajax, the hock to Mr. Slang."

"I'm in that," yells Bludyer from the end of the table. "My lord, I'll join you."

"Mr. ——, I beg your pardon—I shall be very happy to take wine with you, sir."

"It is Mr. Bludyer, the celebrated newspaper writer," whispers Lady Thrum.

"Bludyer, Bludyer? A very clever man, I dare say. He has a very loud voice, and reminds me of Brett. Does your ladyship remember Brett, who played the 'Fathers' at the Haymarket in 1802?"

"What an old stupid Roundtowers is!" says Slang, archly, nudging Mrs. Walker in the side. "How's Walker, eh?"

"My husband is in the country," replied Mrs. Walker, hesitatingly.

"Gammon! *I* know where he is! Law bless you!—don't blush. I've been there myself a dozen times. We were talking about quod, Lady Thrum. Were you ever in college?"

"I was at the Commemoration at Oxford in 1814, when the sovereigns were there, and at Cambridge when Sir George received his degree of Doctor of Music."

"Laud, Laud, *that's* not the college *we* mean."

"There is also the college in Gower Street, where my grandson——"

"This is the college in *Queer Street*, ma'am, haw, haw! Mulligan, you divvle (in an Irish accent), a glass of wine with you. Wine, here, you waiter! What's your name, you black nigger? 'Possum up a gum-tree, eh? Fill him up. Dere he go" (imitating the Mandingo manner of speaking English).

In this agreeable way would Mr. Slang rattle on, speedily making himself the centre of the conversation, and addressing graceful familiarities to all the gentlemen and ladies round him.

It was good to see how the little knight, the most moral and calm of men, was compelled to receive Mr. Slang's stories, and the frightened air with which, at the conclusion of one of them, he would venture upon a commendatory grin. His lady, on her part too, had been laboriously civil; and, on the occasion on which I had the honour of meeting this gentleman and Mrs. Walker, it was the latter who gave the signal for withdrawing to the lady of the house, by saying, "I think, Lady Thrum, it is quite time for us to retire." Some exquisite joke of Mr. Slang's was the cause of this abrupt disappearance. But, as they went upstairs to the drawing-room, Lady Thrum took occasion to say, "My dear, in the course of your profession you will have to submit to many such familiarities on the part of persons of low breeding, such as I fear Mr. Slang is. But let me caution you against giving way to your temper as you did. Did you not perceive that *I* never allowed him to see my inward dissatisfaction? And I make it a particular point that you should be very civil to him to-night. Your interests—our interests—depend upon it."

"And are my interests to make me civil to a wretch like that?"

"Mrs. Walker, would you wish to give lessons in morality and behaviour to Lady Thrum?" said the old lady, drawing herself up with great dignity. It was evident that she had a very strong desire indeed to conciliate Mr. Slang; and hence I have no doubt that Sir George was to have a considerable share of Morgiana's earnings.

Mr. Bludyer, the famous editor of the *Tomahawk*, whose jokes Sir George pretended to admire so much (Sir George who never made a joke in his life), was a press bravo of considerable talent and no principle, and who, to use his own words, would "back himself for a slashing article against any man in England!" He would not only write, but fight on a pinch; was a good scholar, and as savage in his manner as with his pen. Mr. Squinny is of exactly the opposite school, as delicate as milk and water, harmless in his habits, fond of the flute when the state of his chest will allow him, a great practiser of waltzing and dancing in general, and in his journal mildly malicious. He never goes beyond the bounds of politeness, but manages to insinuate a great deal that is disagreeable to an author in the course of twenty lines of criticism. Personally he is quite respectable, and lives with two maiden aunts at Brompton. Nobody, on the contrary, knows where Mr. Bludyer lives. He has houses of call, mysterious

taverns where he may be found at particular hours by those who need him, and where panting publishers are in the habit of hunting him up. For a bottle of wine and a guinea he will write a page of praise or abuse of any man living, or on any subject, or on any line of politics. "Hang it, sir," says he, "pay me enough and I will write down my own father!" According to the state of his credit, he is dressed either almost in rags or else in the extremest flush of fashion. With the latter attire he puts on a haughty and aristocratic air, and would slap a duke on the shoulder. If there is one thing more dangerous than to refuse to lend him a sum of money when he asks for it, it is to lend it to him; for he never pays, and never pardons a man to whom he owes. "Walker refused to cash a bill for me," he had been heard to say, "and I'll do for his wife when she comes out on the stage!" Mrs. Walker and Sir George Thrum were in an agony about the *Tomahawk;* hence the latter's invitation to Mr. Bludyer. Sir George was in a great tremor about the *Flowers of Fashion*, hence his invitation to Mr. Squinny. Mr. Squinny was introduced to Lord Roundtowers and Mr. Fitz-Urse as one of the most delightful and talented of our young men of genius; and Fitz, who believes everything any one tells him, was quite pleased to have the honour of sitting near the live editor of a paper. I have reason to think that Mr. Squinny himself was no less delighted: I saw him giving his card to Fitz-Urse at the end of the second course.

No particular attention was paid to Mr. Desmond Mulligan. Political enthusiasm is his forte. He lives and writes in a rapture. He is, of course, a member of an inn of court, and greatly addicted to after-dinner speaking as a preparation for the bar, where as a young man of genius he hopes one day to shine. He is almost the only man to whom Bludyer is civil, for, if the latter will fight doggedly when there is a necessity for so doing, the former fights like an Irishman, and has a pleasure in it. He has been "on the ground" I don't know how many times, and quitted his country on account of a quarrel with Government regarding certain articles published by him in the *Phœnix* newspaper. With the third bottle, he becomes overpoweringly great on the wrongs of Ireland, and at that period generally volunteers a couple or more of Irish melodies, selecting the most melancholy in the collection. At five in the afternoon, you are sure to see him about the House of Commons, and he knows the "Reform Club" (he calls it the Refawrum) as well as if he were a member. It is curious for the contemplative mind to mark those mysterious hangers-on of Irish members of parliament—strange

runners and aides-de-camp which all the honourable gentlemen appear to possess. Desmond, in his political capacity, is one of these, and besides his calling as reporter to a newspaper, is "our well-informed correspondent" of that famous Munster paper, the *Green Flag of Skibbereen.*

With Mr. Mulligan's qualities and history I only became subsequently acquainted. On the present evening he made but a brief stay at the dinner-table, being compelled by his professional duties to attend the House of Commons.

The above formed the party with whom I had the honour to dine. What other repasts Sir George Thrum may have given, what assemblies of men of mere science he may have invited to give their opinion regarding his prodigy, what other editors of papers he may have pacified or rendered favourable, who knows? On the present occasion, we did not quit the dinner-table until Mr. Slang the manager was considerably excited by wine, and music had been heard for some time in the drawing-room overhead during our absence. An addition had been made to the Thrum party by the arrival of several persons to spend the evening,—a man to play on the violin between the singing, a youth to play on the piano, Miss Horsman to sing with Mrs. Walker, and other scientific characters. In a corner sat a red-faced old lady, of whom the mistress of the mansion took little notice; and a gentleman with a royal button, who blushed and looked exceedingly modest.

"Hang me!" says Mr. Bludyer, who had perfectly good reasons for recognising Mr. Woolsey, and who on this day chose to assume his aristocratic air; "there's a tailor in the room! What do they mean by asking *me* to meet tradesmen?"

"Delancy, my dear," cries Slang, entering the room with a reel, "how's your precious health? Give us your hand! When *are* we to be married? Make room for me on the sofa, that's a duck!"

"Get along, Slang," says Mrs. Crump, addressed by the manager by her maiden name (artists generally drop the title of honour which people adopt in the world, and call each other by their simple surnames)—"get along, Slang, or I'll tell Mrs. S.!" The enterprising manager replies by sportively striking Mrs. Crump on the side a blow which causes a great giggle from the lady insulted, and a most good-humoured threat to box Slang's ears. I fear very much that Morgiana's mother thought Mr. Slang an exceedingly gentlemanlike and agreeable person; besides, she was eager to have his good opinion of Mrs. Walker's singing.

The manager stretched himself out with much gracefulness on the sofa, supporting two little dumpy legs encased in varnished boots on a chair.

"Ajax, some tea to Mr. Slang," said my lady, looking towards that gentleman with a countenance expressive of some alarm, I thought.

"That's right, Ajax, my black prince!" exclaimed Slang, when the negro brought the required refreshment; "and now I suppose you'll be wanted in the orchestra yonder. Don't Ajax play the cymbals, Sir George?"

"Ha, ha, ha! very good—capital!" answered the knight, exceedingly frightened; "but ours is not a *military* band. Miss Horsman, Mr. Craw, my dear Mrs. Ravenswing, shall we begin the trio? Silence, gentlemen, if you please, it is a little piece from my opera of the 'Brigand's Bride.' Miss Horsman takes the Page's part, Mr. Craw is Stiletto the Brigand, my accomplished pupil is the Bride;" and the music began.

"*The Bride.*

"My heart with joy is beating,
My eyes with tears are dim;

"*The Page.*

"Her heart with joy is beating,
Her eyes are fixed on him;

"*The Brigand.*

"My heart with rage is beating,
In blood my eye-balls swim!"

What may have been the merits of the music or the singing, I, of course, cannot guess. Lady Thrum sat opposite the tea-cups, nodding her head and beating time very gravely. Lord Roundtowers, by her side, nodded his head too, for awhile, and then fell asleep. I should have done the same but for the manager, whose actions were worthy of remark. He sang with all the three singers, and a great deal louder than any of them; he shouted bravo! or hissed as he thought proper; he criticised all the points of Mrs. Walker's person. "She'll do, Crump, she'll do—a splendid arm—you'll see her eyes in the shilling gallery! What sort of a foot has she? She's five feet three, if she's an inch! Bravo—slap up—capital—hurra!" and he concluded by saying, with the aid of the Ravenswing, he would put Ligonier's nose out of joint!

The enthusiasm of Mr. Slang almost reconciled Lady Thrum to the abruptness of his manners, and even caused Sir George to forget that his chorus had been interrupted by the obstreperous familiarity of the manager.

"And what do *you* think, Mr. Bludyer," said the tailor, delighted that his *protégée* should be thus winning all hearts, "isn't Mrs. Walker a tip-top singer, eh, sir?"

"I think she's a very bad one, Mr. Woolsey," said the illustrious author, wishing to abbreviate all communications with a tailor to whom he owed forty pounds.

"Then, sir," says Mr. Woolsey, fiercely, "I'll—I'll thank you to pay me my little bill!"

It is true there was no connection between Mrs. Walker's singing and Woolsey's little bill; that the "*Then*, sir," was perfectly illogical on Woolsey's part; but it was a very happy hit for the future fortunes of Mrs. Walker. Who knows what would have come of her *début* but for that "Then, sir," and whether a "smashing article" from the *Tomahawk* might not have ruined her for ever?

"Are you a relation of Mrs. Walker's?" said Mr. Bludyer, in reply to the angry tailor.

"What's that to you, whether I am or not?" replied Woolsey, fiercely. "But I'm the friend of Mrs. Walker, sir; proud am I to say so, sir; and, as the poet says, sir, 'a little learning's a dangerous thing,' sir; and I think a man who don't pay his bills may keep his tongue quiet at least, sir, and not abuse a lady, sir, whom everybody else praises, sir. You shan't humbug *me* any more, sir; you shall hear from my attorney to-morrow, so mark that!"

"Hush, my dear Mr. Woolsey," cried the literary man, "don't make a noise; come into this window: is Mrs. Walker *really* a friend of yours?"

"I've told you so, sir."

"Well, in that case, I shall do my utmost to serve her; and, look you, Woolsey, any article you choose to send about her to the *Tomahawk* I promise you I'll put in."

"*Will* you, though? then we'll say nothing about the little bill."

"You may do on that point," answered Bludyer, haughtily, "exactly as you please. I am not to be frightened from my duty, mind that; and mind, too, that I can write a slashing article better than any man in England: I could crush her by ten lines."

The tables were now turned, and it was Woolsey's turn to be alarmed.

"Pooh! pooh! I *was* angry," said he, "because you abused Mrs. Walker, who's an angel on earth; but I'm very willing to apologise. I say—come—let me take your measure for some new clothes, eh! Mr. B.?"

"I'll come to your shop," answered the literary man, quite appeased. "Silence! they're beginning another song."

The songs, which I don't attempt to describe (and, upon my word and honour, as far as *I* can understand matters, I believe to this day that Mrs. Walker was only an ordinary singer),—the songs lasted a great deal longer than I liked; but I was nailed, as it were, to the spot, having agreed to sup at Knightsbridge barracks with Fitz-Urse, whose carriage was ordered at eleven o'clock.

"My dear Mr. Fitz-Boodle," said our old host to me, "you can do me the greatest service in the world."

"Speak, sir!" said I.

"Will you ask your honourable and gallant friend, the Captain, to drive home Mr. Squinny to Brompton?"

"Can't Mr. Squinny get a cab?"

Sir George looked particularly arch. "Generalship, my dear young friend,—a little harmless generalship. Mr. Squinny will not give much for *my* opinion of my pupil, but he will value very highly the opinion of the Honourable Mr. Fitz-Urse."

For a moral man, was not the little knight a clever fellow? He had bought Mr. Squinny for a dinner worth ten shillings, and for a ride in a carriage with a lord's son. Squinny was carried to Brompton, and set down at his aunts' door, delighted with his new friends, and exceedingly sick with a cigar they had made him smoke.

CHAPTER VIII.

IN WHICH MR. WALKER SHOWS GREAT PRUDENCE AND FORBEARANCE.

THE describing of all these persons does not advance Morgiana's story much. But, perhaps, some country readers are not acquainted with the class of persons by whose printed opinions they are guided, and are simple enough to imagine that mere merit will make a reputation on the stage or elsewhere. The making of a theatrical success is a much more complicated and curious thing than such persons fancy it to be. Immense are the pains taken to get a good word from Mr. This of the *Star*, or Mr. That of the *Courier*, to propitiate the favour of the critic of the day, and get the editors of the metropolis into a good humour,—above all, to have the name of the person to be puffed perpetually before the public. Artists cannot be advertised like Macassar oil or blacking, and they want it to the full as much; hence endless ingenuity must be practised in order to keep the popular attention awake. Suppose a great actor moves from London to Windsor, the *Brentford Champion* must state, that "Yesterday Mr. Blazes and suite passed rapidly through our city; the celebrated comedian is engaged, we hear, at Windsor, to give some of his inimitable readings of our great national bard to the *most illustrious audience* in the realm." This piece of intelligence the *Hammersmith Observer* will question the next week, as thus:—"A contemporary, the *Brentford Champion*, says that Blazes is engaged

to give Shaksperean readings at Windsor to 'the most illustrious audience in the realm.' We question this fact very much. We would, indeed, that it were true; but *the most illustrious audience* in the realm prefer *foreign* melodies to *the native wood-notes wild* of the sweet song-bird of Avon. Mr. Blazes is simply gone to Eton, where his son, Master Massinger Blazes, is suffering, we regret to hear, under a severe attack of the chicken-pox. This complaint (incident to youth) has raged, we understand, with frightful virulence in Eton School."

And if, after the above paragraphs, some London paper chooses to attack the folly of the provincial press, which talks of Mr. Blazes, and chronicles his movements, as if he were a crowned head, what harm is done? Blazes can write in his own name to the London journal and say that it is not *his* fault if provincial journals choose to chronicle his movements, and that he was far from wishing that the afflictions of those who are dear to him should form the subject of public comment, and be held up to public ridicule. "We had no intention of hurting the feelings of an estimable public servant," writes the editor; "and our remarks on the chicken-pox were general, not personal. We sincerely trust that Master Massinger Blazes has recovered from that complaint, and that he may pass through the measles, the whooping-cough, the fourth form, and all other diseases to which youth is subject, with comfort to himself, and credit to his parents and teachers." At his next appearance on the stage after this controversy, a British public calls for Blazes three times after the play; and somehow there is sure to be some one with a laurel-wreath in a stage-box, who flings that chaplet at the inspired artist's feet.

I don't know how it was, but before the *début* of Morgiana, the English press began to heave and throb in a convulsive manner, as if indicative of the near birth of some great thing. For instance, you read in one paper,—

"*Anecdote of Karl Maria Von Weber.*—When the author of *Oberon* was in England, he was invited by a noble duke to dinner, and some of the most celebrated of our artists were assembled to meet him. The signal being given to descend to the *salle-à-manger*, the German composer was invited by his noble host (a bachelor) to lead the way. "Is it not the fashion in your country,' said he, simply, 'for the man of the first eminence to take the first place? Here is one whose genius entitles him to be first *anywhere*.' And, so saying, he pointed to our admirable English composer, Sir George Thrum. The two musicians were friends to the last, and Sir George has still the

identical piece of rosin which the author of the *Freischütz* gave him."—*The Moon* (morning paper), 2d June.

"*George III. a composer.*—Sir George Thrum has in his possession the score of an air, the words from *Samson Agonistes*, an autograph of the late revered monarch. We hear that that excellent composer has in store for us not only an opera, but a pupil, with whose transcendent merits the *élite* of our aristocracy are already familiar."—*Ibid.* June 5.

"*Music with a Vengeance.*—The march to the sound of which the 49th and 75th regiments rushed up the breach of Badajoz was the celebrated air from *Britons Alarmed; or, the Siege of Bergen-op-Zoom*, by our famous English composer, Sir George Thrum. Marshal Davoust said that the French line never stood when that air was performed to the charge of the bayonet. We hear the veteran musician has an opera now about to appear, and have no doubt that *Old England* will now, as then, show its superiority over *all* foreign opponents."—*Albion.*

"We have been accused of preferring the *produit* of the *étranger* to the talent of our own native shores; but those who speak so, little know us. We are *fanatici per la musica* wherever it be, and welcome merit *dans chaque pays du monde.* What do we say? *Le mérite n'a point de pays*, as Napoleon said; and Sir George Thrum (Chevalier de l'ordre de l'Eléphant et Château de Kalbsbraten-Pumpernickel) is a maestro whose fame *appartient à l'Europe.*

"We have just heard the lovely *élève*, whose rare qualities the cavaliere has brought to perfection,—we have heard THE RAVENSWING (*pourquoi cacher un nom que demain un monde va saluer*), and a creature more beautiful and gifted never bloomed before *dans nos climats.* She sang the delicious duet of the 'Nabucodonosore,' with Count Pizzicato, with a *bellezza*, a *grandezza*, a *raggio*, that excited in the bosom of the audience a corresponding *furore:* her *scherzando* was exquisite, though we confess we thought the concluding *fioritura* in the passage in y flat a leetle, a very leetle *sforzata.* Surely the words,

'Giornc d'orrore,
Delire, dolore,
Nabucodonosore,'

should be given *andante*, and not *con strepito:* but this is a *faute bien légère* in the midst of such unrivalled excellence, and only mentioned here that we may have *something* to criticise.

"We hear that the enterprising *impresario* of one of the royal theatres has made an engagement with the Diva; and, if we have a regret, it is that she should be compelled to sing in the unfortunate language of our rude northern clime, which does not *prêter* itself near so well to the *bocca* of the *cantatrice* as do the mellifluous accents of the Lingua Toscana, the *langue par excellence* of song.

"The Ravenswing's voice is a magnificent contra-basso of nine octaves," &c.—*Flowers of Fashion*, June 10.

"Old Thrum, the composer, is bringing out an opera and a pupil. The opera is good, the pupil first-rate. The opera will do much more than compete with the infernal twaddle and disgusting slip-slop of Donizetti, and the milk-and-water fools who imitate him: it will (and we ask the readers of the *Tomahawk*, were we EVER mistaken?) surpass all these; it is *good*, of downright English stuff. The airs are fresh and pleasing, the choruses large and noble, the instrumentation solid and rich, the music is carefully written. We wish old Thrum and his opera well.

"His pupil is a SURE CARD, a splendid woman, and a splendid singer. She is so handsome that she might sing as much out of tune as Miss Ligonier, and the public would forgive her; and sings so well, that were she as ugly as the aforesaid Ligonier, the audience would listen to her. The Ravenswing, that is her fantastical theatrical name (her real name is the same with that of a notorious scoundrel in the Fleet, who invented the Panama swindle, the Pontine Marshes' swindle, the soap swindle—*how are you off for soap now*, Mr. W-lk-r?)—the Ravenswing, we say, will do. Slang has engaged her at thirty guineas per week, and she appears next month in Thrum's opera, of which the words are written by a great ass with some talent—we mean Mr. Mulligan.

"There is a foreign fool in the *Flowers of Fashion* who is doing his best to disgust the public by his filthy flattery. It is enough to make one sick. Why is the foreign beast not kicked out of the paper?"—*The Tomahawk*, June 17.

The first three "anecdotes" were supplied by Mulligan to his paper, with many others which need not here be repeated: he kept them up with amazing energy and variety. Anecdotes of Sir George Thrum met you unexpectedly in queer corners of country papers: puffs of the English school of music appeared perpetually in "notices to correspondents" in the Sunday prints, some of which Mr. Slang commanded, and in others over which the indefatigable Mulligan had a control. This youth was the soul of the little conspiracy for raising Morgiana into fame: and humble as he is, and great and respectable as is Sir George Thrum, it is my belief that the Ravenswing would never have been the Ravenswing she is but for the ingenuity and energy of the honest Hibernian reporter.

It is only the business of the great man who writes the leading articles which appear in the large type of the daily papers to compose those astonishing pieces of eloquence; the other parts of the paper are left to the ingenuity of the sub-editor, whose duty it is to select paragraphs, reject or receive horrid accidents, police reports, &c.;

with which, occupied as he is in the exercise of his tremendous functions, the editor himself cannot be expected to meddle. The fate of Europe is his province; the rise and fall of empires, and the great questions of State demand the editor's attention: the humble puff, the paragraph about the last murder, or the state of the crops, or the sewers in Chancery Lane, is confided to the care of the sub; and it is curious to see what a prodigious number of Irishmen exist among the sub-editors of London. When the Liberator enumerates the services of his countrymen, how the battle of Fontenoy was won by the Irish Brigade, how the battle of Waterloo would have been lost but for the Irish regiments, and enumerates other acts for which we are indebted to Milesian heroism and genius,—he ought at least to mention the Irish brigade of the press, and the amazing services they do to this country.

The truth is, the Irish reporters and soldiers appear to do their duty right well; and my friend Mr. Mulligan is one of the former. Having the interests of his opera and the Ravenswing strongly at heart, and being amongst his brethren an exceedingly popular fellow, he managed matters so that never a day passed but some paragraph appeared somewhere regarding the new singer, in whom, for their countryman's sake, all his brothers and sub-editors felt an interest.

These puffs, destined to make known to all the world the merits of the Ravenswing, of course had an effect upon a gentleman very closely connected with that lady, the respectable prisoner in the Fleet, Captain Walker. As long as he received his weekly two guineas from Mr. Woolsey, and the occasional half-crowns which his wife could spare in her almost daily visits to him, he had never troubled himself to inquire what her pursuits were, and had allowed her (though the worthy woman longed with all her might to betray herself) to keep her secret. He was far from thinking, indeed, that his wife would prove such a treasure to him.

But when the voice of fame and the columns of the public journals brought him each day some new story regarding the merits, genius, and beauty of the Ravenswing; when rumours reached him that she was the favourite pupil of Sir George Thrum; when she brought him five guineas after singing at the "Philharmonic" (other five the good soul had spent in purchasing some smart new cockades, hats, cloaks, and laces, for her little son); when, finally, it was said that Slang, the great manager, offered her an engagement at thirty guineas per week, Mr. Walker became exceedingly interested in his wife's proceedings, of which he demanded from her the fullest explanation.

Using his marital authority, he absolutely forbade Mrs. Walker's appearance on the public stage; he wrote to Sir George Thrum a letter expressive of his highest indignation that negotiations so important should ever have been commenced without his authorisation; and he wrote to his dear Slang (for these gentlemen were very intimate, and in the course of his transactions as an agent Mr. W. had had many dealings with Mr. S.) asking his dear Slang whether the latter thought his friend Walker would be so green as to allow his wife to appear on the stage, and he remain in prison with all his debts on his head?

And it was a curious thing now to behold how eager those very creditors who but yesterday (and with perfect correctness) had denounced Mr. Walker as a swindler; who had refused to come to any composition with him, and had sworn never to release him; how they on a sudden became quite eager to come to an arrangement with him, and offered, nay, begged and prayed him to go free,—only giving them his own and Mrs. Walker's acknowledgment of their debt, with a promise that a part of the lady's salary should be devoted to the payment of the claim.

"The lady's salary!" said Mr. Walker, indignantly, to these gentlemen and their attorneys. "Do you suppose I will allow Mrs. Walker to go on the stage?—do you suppose I am such a fool as to sign bills to the full amount of these claims against me, when in a few months more I can walk out of prison without paying a shilling? Gentlemen, you take Howard Walker for an idiot. I like the Fleet, and rather than pay I'll stay here for these ten years."

In other words, it was the Captain's determination to make some advantageous bargain for himself with his creditors and the gentlemen who were interested in bringing forward Mrs. Walker on the stage. And who can say that in so determining he did not act with laudable prudence and justice?

"You do not, surely, consider, my very dear sir, that half the amount of Mrs. Walker's salaries is too much for my immense trouble and pains in teaching her?" cried Sir George Thrum (who, in reply to Walker's note, thought it most prudent to wait personally on that gentleman). "Remember that I am the first master in England; that I have the best interest in England; that I can bring her out at the Palace, and at every concert and musical festival in England; that I am obliged to teach her every single note that she utters; and that without me she could no more sing a song than her little baby could walk without its nurse."

"I believe about half what you say," said Mr. Walker.

"My dear Captain Walker! would you question my integrity? Who was it that made Mrs. Millington's fortune,—the celebrated Mrs. Millington, who has now got a hundred thousand pounds? Who was it that brought out the finest tenor in Europe, Poppleton? Ask the musical world, ask those great artists themselves, and they will tell you they owe their reputation, their fortune, to Sir George Thrum."

"It is very likely," replied the Captain, coolly. "You *are* a good master, I dare say, Sir George; but I am not going to article Mrs. Walker to you for three years, and sign her articles in the Fleet. Mrs. Walker shan't sing till I'm a free man, that's flat: if I stay here till you're dead she shan't."

"Gracious powers, sir!" exclaimed Sir George, "do you expect me to pay your debts?"

"Yes, old boy," answered the Captain, "and to give me something handsome in hand, too; and that's my ultimatum: and so I wish you good morning, for I'm engaged to play a match at tennis below."

This little interview exceedingly frightened the worthy knight, who went home to his lady in a delirious state of alarm occasioned by the audacity of Captain Walker.

Mr. Slang's interview with him was scarcely more satisfactory, He owed, he said, four thousand pounds. His creditors might be brought to compound for five shillings in the pound. He would not consent to allow his wife to make a single engagement until the creditors were satisfied, and until he had a handsome sum in hand to begin the world with. "Unless my wife comes out, you'll be in the *Gazette* yourself, you know you will. So you may take her or leave her, as you think fit."

"Let her sing one night as a trial," said Mr. Slang.

"If she sings one night, the creditors will want their money in full," replied the Captain. "I shan't let her labour, poor thing, for the profit of those scoundrels!" added the prisoner, with much feeling. And Slang left him with a much greater respect for Walker than he had ever before possessed. He was struck with the gallantry of the man who could triumph over misfortunes, nay, make misfortune itself an engine of good luck.

Mrs. Walker was instructed instantly to have a severe sore throat. The journals in Mr. Slang's interest deplored this illness pathetically; while the papers in the interest of the opposition theatre magnified it with great malice. "The new singer," said one, "the

great wonder which Slang promised us, is as hoarse as a *raven!*" "Doctor Thorax pronounces," wrote another paper, "that the quinsy, which has suddenly prostrated Mrs. Ravenswing, whose singing at the 'Philharmonic,' previous to her appearance at the 'T. R——,' excited so much applause, has destroyed the lady's voice for ever. We luckily need no other prima donna, when that place, as nightly thousands acknowledge, is held by Miss Ligonier." The *Looker-on* said, "That although some well-informed contemporaries had declared Mrs. W. Ravenswing's complaint to be a quinsy, others, on whose authority they could equally rely, had pronounced it to be a consumption. At all events, she was in an exceedingly dangerous state; from which, though we do not expect, we heartily trust she may recover. Opinions differ as to the merits of this lady, some saying that she was altogether inferior to Miss Ligonier, while other connoisseurs declare the latter lady to be by no means so accomplished a person. This point, we fear," continued the *Looker-on*, "can never now be settled; unless, which we fear is improbable, Mrs. Ravenswing should ever so far recover as to be able to make her *début;* and even then, the new singer will not have a fair chance unless her voice and strength shall be fully restored. This information, which we have from exclusive resources, may be relied on," concluded the *Looker-on*, "as authentic."

It was Mr. Walker himself, that artful and audacious Fleet prisoner, who concocted those very paragraphs against his wife's health which appeared in the journals of the Ligonier party. The partisans of that lady were delighted, the creditors of Mr. Walker astounded, at reading them. Even Sir George Thrum was taken in, and came to the Fleet prison in considerable alarm.

"Mum's the word, my good sir!" said Mr. Walker. "Now is the time to make arrangements with the creditors."

Well, these arrangements were finally made. It does not matter how many shillings in the pound satisfied the rapacious creditors of Morgiana's husband. But it is certain that her voice returned to her all of a sudden upon the Captain's release. The papers of the Mulligan faction again trumpeted her perfections; the agreement with Mr. Slang was concluded; that with Sir George Thrum the great composer satisfactorily arranged; and the new opera underlined in immense capitals in the bills, and put in rehearsal with immense expenditure on the part of the scene-painter and costumier.

Need we tell with what triumphant success the "Brigand's Bride" was received? All the Irish sub-editors the next morning took care

to have such an account of it as made Miss Ligonier and Baroski die with envy. All the reporters who could spare time were in the boxes to support their friend's work. All the journeymen tailors of the establishment of Linsey, Woolsey and Co., had pit tickets given to them, and applauded with all their might. All Mr. Walker's friends of the "Regent Club" lined the side-boxes with white kid gloves; and in a little box by themselves sat Mrs. Crump and Mr. Woolsey, a great deal too much agitated to applaud—so agitated, that Woolsey even forgot to fling down the *bouquet* he had brought for the Ravenswing.

But there was no lack of those horticultural ornaments. The theatre servants wheeled away a wheelbarrow-full (which were flung on the stage the next night over again); and Morgiana blushing, panting, weeping, was led off by Mr. Poppleton, the eminent tenor, who had crowned her with one of the most conspicuous of the chaplets.

Here she flew to her husband, and flung her arms round his neck. He was flirting behind the side-scenes with Mademoiselle Flicflac, who had been dancing in the divertissement; and was probably the only man in the theatre of those who witnessed the embrace that did not care for it. Even Slang was affected, and said with perfect sincerity that he wished he had been in Walker's place. The manager's fortune was made, at least for the season. He acknowledged so much to Walker, who took a week's salary for his wife in advance that very night.

There was, as usual, a grand supper in the green-room. The terrible Mr. Bludyer appeared in a new coat of the well-known Woolsey cut, and the little tailor himself and Mrs. Crump were not the least happy of the party. But when the Ravenswing took Woolsey's hand, and said she never would have been there but for him, Mr. Walker looked very grave, and hinted to her that she must not, in her position, encourage the attentions of persons in that rank of life. "I shall pay," said he, proudly, "every farthing that is owing to Mr. Woolsey, and shall employ him for the future. But you understand, my love, that one cannot at one's own table receive one's own tailor."

Slang proposed Morgiana's health in a tremendous speech, which elicited cheers, and laughter, and sobs, such as only managers have the art of drawing from the theatrical gentlemen and ladies in their employ. It was observed, especially among the chorus-singers at the bottom of the table, that their emotion was intense. They had a

meeting the next day and voted a piece of plate to Adolphus Slang, Esq., for his eminent services in the cause of the drama.

Walker returned thanks for his lady. That was, he said, the proudest moment of his life. He was proud to think that he had educated her for the stage, happy to think that his sufferings had not been in vain, and that his exertions in her behalf were crowned with full success. In her name and his own he thanked the company, and sat down, and was once more particularly attentive to Mademoiselle Flicflac.

Then came an oration from Sir George Thrum, in reply to Slang's toast to ***him***. It was very much to the same effect as the speech by Walker, the two gentlemen attributing to themselves individually the merit of bringing out Mrs. Walker. He concluded by stating that he should always hold Mrs. Walker as the daughter of his heart, and to the last moment of his life should love and cherish her. It is certain that Sir George was exceedingly elated that night, and would have been scolded by his lady on his return home, but for the triumph of the evening.

Mulligan's speech of thanks, as author of the "Brigand's Bride," was, it must be confessed, extremely tedious. It seemed there would be no end to it; when he got upon the subject of Ireland especially, which somehow was found to be intimately connected with the interests of music and the theatre. Even the choristers pooh-poohed this speech, coming though it did from the successful author, whose songs of wine, love, and battle, they had been repeating that night.

The "Brigand's Bride" ran for many nights. Its choruses were tuned on the organs of the day. Morgiana's airs, "The Rose upon my Balcony" and "The Lightning on the Cataract" (recitative and scena) were on everybody's lips, and brought so many guineas to Sir George Thrum that he was encouraged to have his portrait engraved, which still may be seen in the music-shops. Not many persons, I believe, bought proof impressions of the plate, price two guineas; whereas, on the contrary, all the young clerks in banks, and all the *fast* young men of the universities, had pictures of the Ravenswing in their apartments—as Biondetta (the brigand's bride), as Zelyma (in the "Nuptials of Benares"), as Barbareska (in the "Mine of Tobolsk"), and in all her famous characters. In the latter she disguises herself as an Uhlan, in order to save her father, who is in prison; and the Ravenswing looked so fascinating in this costume in pantaloons and yellow boots, that Slang was for having her instantly in Captain Macheath, whence arose their quarrel.

She was replaced at Slang's theatre by Snooks, the rhinoceros-tamer, with his breed of wild buffaloes. Their success was immense. Slang gave a supper, at which all the company burst into tears; and assembling in the green-room next day, they, as usual, voted a piece of plate to Adolphus Slang, Esq., for his eminent services to the drama.

In the Captain Macheath dispute Mr. Walker would have had his wife yield; but on this point, and for once, she disobeyed her husband and left the theatre. And when Walker cursed her (according to his wont) for her abominable selfishness and disregard of his property, she burst into tears and said she had spent but twenty guineas on herself and baby during the year, that her theatrical dressmaker's bills were yet unpaid, and that she had never asked him how much he spent on that odious French *figurante*.

All this was true, except about the French *figurante*. Walker, as the lord and master, received all Morgiana's earnings, and spent them as a gentleman should. He gave very neat dinners at a cottage in the Regent's Park (Mr. and Mrs. Walker lived in Green Street, Grosvenor Square), he played a good deal at the "Regent;" but as to the French *figurante*, it must be confessed, that Mrs. Walker was in a sad error: *that* lady and the Captain had parted long ago; it was Madame Dolores de Tras-os-Montes who inhabited the cottage in St. John's Wood now.

But if some little errors of this kind might be attributable to the Captain, on the other hand, when his wife was in the provinces, he was the most attentive of husbands; made all her bargains, and received every shilling before he would permit her to sing a note. Thus he prevented her from being cheated, as a person of her easy temper doubtless would have been, by designing managers and needy concert-givers. They always travelled with four horses; and Walker was adored in every one of the principal hotels in England. The waiters flew at his bell. The chambermaids were afraid he was a sad naughty man, and thought his wife no such great beauty; the landlords preferred him to any duke. *He* never looked at their bills, not he! In fact his income was at least four thousand a year for some years of his life.

Master Woolsey Walker was put to Doctor Wapshot's seminary, whence, after many disputes on the doctor's part as to getting his half-year's accounts paid, and after much complaint of ill-treatment on the little boy's side, he was withdrawn, and placed under the care of the Rev. Mr. Swishtail, at Turnham Green; where all his bills are paid by his godfather, now the head of the firm of Woolsey and Co.

As a gentleman, Mr. Walker still declines to see him; but he has not, as far as I have heard, paid the sums of money which he threatened to refund; and, as he is seldom at home, the worthy tailor can come to Green Street at his leisure. He and Mrs. Crump, and Mrs. Walker, often take the omnibus to Brentford, and a cake with them to little Woolsey at school; to whom the tailor says he will leave every shilling of his property.

The Walkers have no other children; but when she takes her airing in the Park she always turns away at the sight of a low phaeton, in which sits a woman with rouged cheeks, and a great number of over-dressed children with a French *bonne*, whose name, I am given to understand, is Madame Dolores de Tras-os-Montes. Madame de Tras-os-Montes always puts a great gold glass to her eye as the Ravenswing's carriage passes, and looks into it with a sneer. The two coachmen used always to exchange queer winks at each other in the ring, until Madame de Tras-os-Montes lately adopted a tremendous chasseur, with huge whiskers and a green and gold livery; since which time the formerly named gentlemen do not recognize each other.

The Ravenswing's life is one of perpetual triumph on the stage; and, as every one of the fashionable men about town have been in love with her, you may fancy what a pretty character she has. Lady Thrum would die sooner than speak to that unhappy young woman; and, in fact, the Thrums have a new pupil, who is a siren without the dangerous qualities of one, who has the person of Venus and the mind of a Muse, and who is coming out at one of the theatres immediately. Baroski says, "De liddle Rafenschwing is just as font of me as effer!" People are very shy about receiving her in society; and when she goes to sing at a concert, Miss Prim starts up and skurries off in a state of the greatest alarm, lest "that person" should speak to her.

Walker is voted a good, easy, rattling, gentlemanly fellow, and nobody's enemy but his own. His wife, they say, is dreadfully extravagant: and, indeed, since his marriage, and, in spite of his wife's large income, he has been in the Bench several times; but she signs some bills and he comes out again, and is as gay and genial as ever. All mercantile speculations he has wisely long since given up; he likes to throw a main of an evening, as I have said, and to take his couple of bottles at dinner. On Friday he attends at the theatre for his wife's salary, and transacts no other business during the week. He grows exceedingly stout, dyes his hair, and has a bloated purple look about the nose and cheeks, very different from that which first charmed the heart of Morgiana.

By the way, Eglantine has been turned out of the Bower of Bloom, and now keeps a shop at Tunbridge Wells. Going down thither last year without a razor, I asked a fat, seedy man, lolling in a faded nankeen jacket at the door of a tawdry little shop in the Pantiles, to shave me. He said in reply, "Sir, I do not practise in that branch of the profession!" and turned back into the little shop. It was Archibald Eglantine. But in the wreck of his fortunes, he still has his captain's uniform, and his grand cross of the order of the Castle and Falcon of Panama.

POSTSCRIPT.

G. FITZ-BOODLE, ESQ., TO O. YORKE, ESQ.

Zum Trierischen Hof, Coblenz, July 10, 1843.

MY DEAR YORKE,— The story of the Ravenswing was written a long time since, and I never could account for the bad taste of the publishers of the metropolis who refused it an insertion in their various magazines. This fact would never have been alluded to but for the following circumstance:—

Only yesterday, as I was dining at this excellent hotel, I remarked a bald-headed gentleman in a blue coat and brass buttons, who looked like a colonel on half-pay, and by his side a lady and a little boy of twelve, whom the gentleman was cramming with an amazing quantity of cherries and cakes. A stout old dame in a wonderful cap and ribands was seated by the lady's side, and it was easy to see they were English, and I thought I had already made their acquaintance elsewhere.

The younger of the ladies at last made a bow with an accompanying blush.

"Surely," said I, "I have the honour of speaking to Mrs. Ravenswing?"

"Mrs. WOOLSEY, sir," said the gentleman; "my wife has long since left the stage:" and at this the old lady in the wonderful cap trod on my toes very severely, and nodded her head and all her ribands in a most mysterious way. Presently the two ladies rose and left the table, the elder declaring that she heard the baby crying.

"Woolsey my dear, go with your mamma," said Mr. Woolsey, patting the boy on the head: the young gentleman obeyed the command, carrying off a plate of macaroons with him.

"Your son is a fine boy, sir," said I.

"My step-son, sir," answered Mr. Woolsey; and added in a louder voice, "I knew you, Mr. Fitz-Boodle, at once, but did not mention your name for fear of agitating my wife. She don't like to have the memory of old times renewed, sir; her former husband, whom you knew, Captain Walker, made her very unhappy. He died in America, sir, of this, I fear" (pointing to the

bottle), "and Mrs. W. quitted the stage a year before I quitted business. Are you going on to Wiesbaden?"

They went off in their carriage that evening, the boy on the box making great efforts to blow out of the postilion's tasselled horn.

I am glad that poor Morgiana is happy at last, and hasten to inform you of the fact: I am going to visit the old haunts of my youth at Pumpernickel. Adieu.

Yours,

G. F.-B.

MR. AND MRS. FRANK BERRY.

CHAPTER I.

THE FIGHT AT SLAUGHTER HOUSE.

I AM very fond of reading about battles, and have most of Marlborough's and Wellington's at my finger's ends; but the most tremendous combat I ever saw, and one that interests me to think of more than Malplaquet or Waterloo (which, by the way, has grown to be a downright nuisance, so much do men talk of it after dinner, prating most disgustingly about "the Prussians coming up," and what not)—I say the most tremendous combat ever known was that between Berry and Biggs the gown-boy, which commenced in a certain place called Middle Briars, situated in the midst of the cloisters that run along the side of the playground of Slaughter House School, near Smithfield, London. It was there, madam, that your humble servant had the honour of acquiring, after six years' labour, that immense fund of classical knowledge which in after life has been so exceedingly useful to him.

The circumstances of the quarrel were these:—Biggs, the gown-boy (a man who, in those days, I thought was at least seven feet high, and was quite thunderstruck to find in after life that he measured no more than five feet four), was what we called "second cock" of the

school; the first cock was a great big, good-humoured, lazy, fair-haired fellow, Old Hawkins by name, who, because he was large and good-humoured, hurt nobody. Biggs, on the contrary, was a sad bully; he had half-a-dozen fags, and beat them all unmercifully. Moreover, he had a little brother, a boarder in Potky's house, whom, as a matter of course, he hated and maltreated worse than any one else.

Well, one day, because young Biggs had not brought his brother his hoops, or had not caught a ball at cricket, or for some other equally good reason, Biggs the elder so belaboured the poor little fellow, that Berry, who was sauntering by, and saw the dreadful blows which the elder brother was dealing to the younger with his hockey-stick, felt a compassion for the little fellow (perhaps he had a jealousy against Biggs, and wanted to try a few rounds with him, but that I can't vouch for); however, Berry passing by, stopped and said, "Don't you think you have thrashed the boy enough, Biggs?" He spoke this in a very civil tone, for he never would have thought of interfering rudely with the sacred privilege that an upper boy at a public school always has of beating a junior, especially when they happen to be brothers.

The reply of Biggs, as might be expected, was to hit young Biggs with the hockey-stick twice as hard as before, until the little wretch howled with pain. "I suppose it's no business of yours, Berry," said Biggs, thumping away all the while, and laid on worse and worse.

Until Berry (and, indeed, little Biggs) could bear it no longer, and the former, bouncing forward, wrenched the stick out of old Biggs' hands, and sent it whirling out of the cloister window, to the great wonder of a crowd of us small boys, who were looking on. Little boys always like to see a little companion of their own soundly beaten.

"There!" said Berry, looking into Biggs' face, as much as to say, "I've gone and done it;" and he added to the brother, "Scud away, you little thief; I've saved you this time."

"Stop, young Biggs!" roared out his brother after a pause; "or I'll break every bone in your infernal, scoundrelly skin!"

Young Biggs looked at Berry, then at his brother, then came at his brother's order, as if back to be beaten again, but lost heart and ran away as fast as his little legs could carry him.

"I'll do for him another time," said Biggs. "Here, under-boy, take my coat;" and we all began to gather round and formed a ring.

"We had better wait till after school, Biggs," cried Berry, quite

cool, but looking a little pale. "There are only five minutes now, and it will take you more than that to thrash me."

Biggs upon this committed a great error; for he struck Berry slightly across the face with the back of his hand, saying, "You are in a funk." But this was a feeling which Frank Berry did not in the least entertain; for in reply to Biggs' back-hander, and as quick as thought, and with all his might and main—pong! he delivered a blow upon old Biggs' nose that made the claret spirt, and sent the second cock down to the ground as if he had been shot.

He was up again, however, in a minute, his face white and gashed with blood, his eyes glaring, a ghastly spectacle; and Berry, meanwhile, had taken his coat off, and by this time there were gathered in the cloisters, on all the windows, and upon each other's shoulders, one hundred and twenty young gentlemen at the very least, for the news had gone out through the playground of "a fight between Berry and Biggs."

But Berry was quite right in his remark about the propriety of deferring the business, for at this minute Mr. Chip, the second master, came down the cloisters going into school, and grinned in his queer way as he saw the state of Biggs' face. "Holloa, Mr. Biggs," said he, "I suppose you have run against a finger-post." That was the regular joke with us at school, and you may be sure we all laughed heartily: as we always did when Mr. Chip made a joke, or anything like a joke. "You had better go to the pump, sir, and get yourself washed, and not let Doctor Buckle see you in that condition." So saying, Mr. Chip disappeared to his duties in the under-school, whither all we little boys followed him.

It was Wednesday, a half-holiday, as everybody knows, and boiled-beef day at Slaughter House. I was in the same boarding-house with Berry, and we all looked to see whether he ate a good dinner, just as one would examine a man who was going to be hanged. I recollected, in after-life, in Germany, seeing a friend who was going to fight a duel, eat five larks for his breakfast, and thought I had seldom witnessed greater courage. Berry ate moderately of the boiled beef—*boiled child* we used to call it at school, in our elegant, jocular way; he knew a great deal better than to load his stomach upon the eve of such a contest as was going to take place.

Dinner was very soon over, and Mr. Chip, who had been all the while joking Berry, and pressing him to eat, called him up into his study, to the great disappointment of us all, for we thought he was going to prevent the fight; but no such thing. The Rev. Edward Chip took Berry into his study, and poured him out two glasses of

port-wine, which he made him take with a biscuit, and patted him on the back, and went off. I have no doubt he was longing, like all of us, to see the battle ; but *etiquette*, you know, forbade.

When we went out into the green, Old Hawkins was there—the great Hawkins, the cock of the school. I have never seen the man since, but still think of him as of something awful, gigantic, mysterious ; he who could thrash everybody, who could beat all the masters : how we longed for him to put in his hand and lick Buckle ! He was a dull boy, not very high in the school, and had all his exercises written for him. Buckle knew this, but respected him ; never called him up to read Greek plays ; passed over all his blunders, which were many ; let him go out of half-holidays into the town as he pleased : how should any man dare to stop him—the great, calm, magnanimous, silent Strength ! They say he licked a Life-Guardsman ; I wonder whether it was Shaw, who killed all those Frenchmen? no, it could not be Shaw, for he was dead *au champ d'honneur;* but he *would* have licked Shaw if he had been alive. A bargeman I know he licked, at Jack Randall's in Slaughter House Lane. Old Hawkins was too lazy to play at cricket ; he sauntered all day in the sunshine about the green, accompanied by little Tippins, who was in the sixth form, laughed and joked at Hawkins eternally, and was the person who wrote all his exercises.

Instead of going into town this afternoon, Hawkins remained at Slaughter House, to see the great fight between the second and third cocks.

The different masters of the school kept boarding-houses (such as Potky's, Chip's, Wicken's, Pinney's, and so on), and the playground or "green," as it was called, although the only thing green about the place was the broken glass on the walls that separate Slaughter House from Wilderness Row and Goswell Street—(many a time have I seen Mr. Pickwick look out of his window in that street, though we did not know him then)—the playground, or green, was common to all. But if any stray boy from Potky's was found, for instance, in, or entering into, Chip's house, the most dreadful tortures were practised upon him : as I can answer in my own case.

Fancy, then, our astonishment at seeing a little three-foot wretch, of the name of Wills, one of Hawkins's fags (they were both in Potky's), walk undismayed amongst us lions at Chip's house, as the "rich and rare" young lady did in Ireland. We were going to set upon him and devour or otherwise maltreat him, when he cried out in a little shrill, impertinent voice, "*Tell Berry I want him!*"

We all roared with laughter. Berry was in the sixth form, and Wills or any under-boy would as soon have thought of "wanting" him, as I should of wanting the Duke of Wellington.

Little Wills looked round in an imperious kind of way. "Well," says he, stamping his foot, "do you hear? *Tell Berry that* HAWKINS *wants him!*"

As for resisting the law of Hawkins, you might as soon think of resisting immortal Jove. Berry and Tolmash, who was to be his bottle-holder, made their appearance immediately, and walked out into the green where Hawkins was waiting, and, with an irresistible audacity that only belonged to himself, in the face of nature and all the regulations of the place, was smoking a cigar. When Berry and Tolmash found him, the three began slowly pacing up and down in the sunshine, and we little boys watched them.

Hawkins moved his arms and hands every now and then, and was evidently laying down the law about boxing. We saw his fists darting out every now and then with mysterious swiftness, hitting one, two, quick as thought, as if in the face of an adversary; now his left hand went up, as if guarding his own head, now his immense right fist dreadfully flapped the air, as if punishing his imaginary opponent's miserable ribs. The conversation lasted for some ten minutes, about which time gown-boys' dinner was over, and we saw these youths in their black, horned-button jackets and knee-breeches, issuing from their door in the cloisters. There were no hoops, no cricket-bats, as usual on a half-holiday. Who would have thought of play in expectation of such tremendous sport as was in store for us?

Towering among the gown-boys, of whom he was the head and the tyrant, leaning upon Bushby's arm, and followed at a little distance by many curious, pale, awe-stricken boys, dressed in his black silk stockings, which he always sported, and with a crimson bandanna tied round his waist, came BIGGS. His nose was swollen with the blow given before school, but his eyes flashed fire. He was laughing and sneering with Bushby, and evidently intended to make minced meat of Berry.

The betting began pretty freely: the bets were against poor Berry. Five to three were offered—in ginger-beer. I took six to four in raspberry open tarts. The upper boys carried the thing farther still: and I know for a fact, that Swang's book amounted to four pound three (but he hedged a good deal), and Tittery lost seventeen shillings in a single bet to Pitts, who took the odds.

As Biggs and his party arrived, I heard Hawkins say to Berry,

"For heaven's sake, my boy, fib with your right, and *mind his left hand!*"

Middle Briars was voted to be too confined a space for the combat, and it was agreed that it should take place behind the under-school in the shade, whither we all went. Hawkins, with his immense silver hunting-watch, kept the time; and water was brought from the pump close to Notley's the pastrycook's, who did not admire fisticuffs at all on half-holidays, for the fights kept the boys away from his shop. Gutley was the only fellow in the school who remained faithful to him, and he sat on the counter—the great gormandising brute!—eating tarts the whole day.

This famous fight, as every Slaughter House man knows, lasted for two hours and twenty-nine minutes, by Hawkins's immense watch. All this time the air resounded with cries of "Go it, Berry!" "Go it, Biggs!" "Pitch into him!" "Give it him!" and so on. Shall I describe the hundred and two rounds of the combat?—No!—It would occupy too much space, and the taste for such descriptions has passed away.*

1st round. Both the combatants fresh, and in prime order. The weight and inches somewhat on the gown-boy's side. Berry goes gallantly in, and delivers a clinker on the gown-boy's jaw. Biggs makes play with his left. Berry down.

* * * * *

4th round. Claret drawn in profusion from the gown-boy's grog-shop. (He went down, and had his front tooth knocked out, but the blow cut Berry's knuckles a great deal.)

* * * * *

15th round. Chancery. Fibbing. Biggs makes dreadful work with his left. Break away. Rally. Biggs down. Betting still six to four on the gown-boy.

* * * * *

20th round. The men both dreadfully punished. Berry somewhat shy of his adversary's left hand.

* * * * *

29th to 42nd round. The Chipsite all this while breaks away from the gown-boy's left, and goes down on a knee. Six to four

* As it is very probable that many fair readers may not approve of the extremely forcible language in which the combat is depicted, I beg them to skip it and pass on to the next chapter, and to remember that it has been modelled on the style of the very best writers of the sporting papers.

on the gown-boy, until the fortieth round, when the bets became equal.

* * * * *

102nd and last round. For half-an-hour the men had stood up to each other, but were almost too weary to strike. The gown-boy's face hardly to be recognized, swollen and streaming with blood. The Chipsite in a similar condition, and still more punished about his side from his enemy's left hand. Berry gives a blow at his adversary's face, and falls over him as he falls.

The gown-boy can't come up to time. And thus ended the great fight of Berry and Biggs.

* * * * *

And what, pray, has this horrid description of a battle and a parcel of school-boys to do with *Men's Wives?*

What has it to do with *Men's Wives?*—A great deal more, madam, than you think for. Only read Chapter II., and you shall hear.

CHAPTER II.

THE COMBAT AT VERSAILLES.

AFTERWARDS came to be Berry's fag, and, though beaten by him daily, he allowed, of course, no one else to lay a hand upon me, and I got no more thrashing than was good for me. Thus an intimacy grew up between us, and after he left Slaughter House and went into the dragoons, the honest fellow did not forget his old friend, but actually made his appearance one day in the playground in moustaches and a braided coat, and gave me a gold pencil-case and a couple of sovereigns. I blushed when I took them, but take them I did; and I think the thing I almost best recollect in my life, is the sight of Berry getting behind an immense bay cab-horse, which was held by a correct little groom, and was waiting near the school in Slaughter House Square. He proposed, too, to have me to "Long's," where he was lodging for the time; but this invitation was refused on my behalf by Doctor Buckle, who said, and possibly with correctness, that I should get little good by spending my holiday with such a scapegrace.

Once afterwards he came to see me at Christ Church, and we made a show of writing to one another, and didn't, and always had a hearty mutual goodwill; and though we did not quite burst into tears on parting, were yet quite happy when occasion threw us together, and so almost lost sight of each other. I heard lately that Berry was married, and am rather ashamed to say, that I was not so curious as even to ask the maiden name of his lady.

Last summer I was at Paris, and had gone over to Versailles to meet a party, one of which was a young lady to whom I was tenderly . . . . . But, never mind. The day was rainy, and the party did not keep its appointment; and after yawning through the interminable Palace picture-galleries, and then making an attempt to smoke a cigar in the Palace garden—for which crime I was nearly run through the body by a rascally sentinel—I was driven, perforce, into the great bleak, lonely *Place* before the Palace, with its roads branching off to all the towns in the world, which Louis and Napoleon once intended to conquer, and there enjoyed my favourite pursuit at leisure, and was meditating whether I should go back to "Véfour's"

for dinner, or patronize my friend M. Duboux of the "Hôtel des Réservoirs," who gives not only a good dinner, but as dear a one as heart can desire. I was, I say, meditating these things, when a carriage passed by. It was a smart, low calash, with a pair of bay horses and a postilion in a drab jacket, that twinkled with innumerable buttons, and I was too much occupied in admiring the build of the machine, and the extreme tightness of the fellow's inexpressibles, to look at the personages within the carriage, when the gentleman roared out "Fitz!" and the postilion pulled up, and the lady gave a shrill scream, and a little black-muzzled spaniel began barking and yelling with all his might, and a man with moustaches jumped out of the vehicle, and began shaking me by the hand.

"Drive home, John," said the gentleman: "I'll be with you, my love, in an instant—it's an old friend. Fitz, let me present you to Mrs. Berry."

The lady made an exceedingly gentle inclination of her black-velvet bonnet, and said, "Pray, my love, remember that it is just dinner-time. However, never mind *me*." And with another slight toss and a nod to the postilion, that individual's white leather breeches began to jump up and down again in the saddle, and the carriage disappeared, leaving me shaking my old friend Berry by the hand.

He had long quitted the army, but still wore his military beard, which gave to his fair pink face a fierce and lion-like look. He was extraordinarily glad to see me, as only men are glad who live in a small town, or in dull company. There is no destroyer of friendships like London, where a man has no time to think of his neighbour, and has far too many friends to care for them. He told me in a breath of his marriage, and how happy he was, and straight insisted that I must come home to dinner, and see more of Angelica, who had invited me herself—didn't I hear her?

"Mrs. Berry asked *you*, Frank; but I certainly did not hear her ask *me!*"

"She would not have mentioned the dinner but that she meant me to ask you. I know she did," cried Frank Berry. "And, besides —hang it—I'm master of the house. So come you shall. No ceremony, old boy—one or two friends—snug family party—and we'll talk of old times over a bottle of claret."

There did not seem to me to be the slightest objection to this arrangement, except that my boots were muddy, and my coat of the morning sort. But as it was quite impossible to go to Paris and back again in a quarter of an hour, and as a man may dine with perfect comfort to himself in a frock-coat, it did not occur to me to be particularly squeamish, or to decline an old friend's invitation upon a pretext so trivial.

Accordingly we walked to a small house in the Avenue de Paris, and were admitted first into a small garden ornamented by a grotto, a fountain, and several nymphs in plaster-of-Paris, then up a mouldy old steep stair into a hall, where a statue of Cupid and another of Venus welcomed us with their eternal simper; then through a *salle-à-manger*, where covers were laid for six; and finally to a little saloon, where Fido the dog began to howl furiously according to his wont.

It was one of the old pavilions that had been built for a pleasure-house in the gay days of Versailles, ornamented with abundance of

damp Cupids and cracked gilt cornices, and old mirrors let into the walls, and gilded once, but now painted a dingy French white. The long low windows looked into the court, where the fountain played its ceaseless dribble, surrounded by numerous rank creepers and weedy flowers, but in the midst of which the statues stood with their bases quite moist and green.

I hate fountains and statues in dark, confined places : that cheerless, endless plashing of water is the most inhospitable sound ever heard. The stiff grin of those French statues, or ogling Canova Graces, is by no means more happy, I think, than the smile of a skeleton, and not so natural. Those little pavilions in which the old *roués* sported, were never meant to be seen by daylight, depend on't. They were lighted up with a hundred wax-candles, and the little fountain yonder was meant only to cool their claret. And so, my first impression of Berry's place of abode was rather a dismal one. However, I heard him in the *salle-à-manger* drawing the corks, which went off with a *cloop*, and that consoled me.

As for the furniture of the rooms appertaining to the Berrys, there was a harp in a leather case, and a piano, and a flute-box, and a huge tambour with a Saracen's nose just begun, and likewise on the table a multiplicity of those little gilt books, half sentimental and half religious, which the wants of the age and of our young ladies have produced in such numbers of late. I quarrel with no lady's taste in that way ; but heigho ! I had rather that Mrs. Fitz-Boodle should read " Humphrey Clinker ! "

Beside these works, there was a "Peerage" of course. What genteel family was ever without one ?

I was making for the door to see Frank drawing the corks, and was bounced at by the amiable little black-muzzled spaniel, who fastened his teeth in my pantaloons, and received a polite kick in consequence, which sent him howling to the other end of the room, and the animal was just in the act of performing that feat of agility, when the door opened and madame made her appearance. Frank came behind her peering over her shoulder with rather an anxious look.

Mrs. Berry is an exceedingly white and lean person. She has thick eyebrows, which meet rather dangerously over her nose, which is Grecian, and a small mouth with no lips—a sort of feeble pucker in the face as it were. Under her eyebrows are a pair of enormous eyes, which she is in the habit of turning constantly ceiling-wards. Her hair is rather scarce, and worn in bandeaux, and she commonly

mounts a sprig of laurel, or a dark flower or two, which, with the sham *tour*—I believe that is the name of the knob of artificial hair that many ladies sport—gives her a rigid and classical look. She is dressed in black, and has invariably the neatest of silk stockings and shoes; for forsooth her foot is a fine one, and she always sits with it before her, looking at it, stamping it, and admiring it a great deal. "Fido," she says to her spaniel, "you have almost crushed my poor foot;" or, "Frank," to her husband, "bring me a footstool;" or, "I suffer so from cold in the feet," and so forth; but be the conversation what it will, she is always sure to put *her foot* into it.

She invariably wears on her neck the miniature of her late father, Sir George Catacomb, apothecary to George III.; and she thinks those two men the greatest the world ever saw. She was born in Baker Street, Portman Square, and that is saying almost enough of her. She is as long, as genteel, and as dreary, as that deadly-lively place, and sports, by way of ornament, her papa's hatchment, as it were, as every tenth Baker Street house has taught her.

What induced such a jolly fellow as Frank Berry to marry Miss Angelica Catacomb no one can tell. He met her, he says, at a ball at Hampton Court, where his regiment was quartered, and where, to this day, lives "her aunt Lady Pash." She alludes perpetually in conversation to that celebrated lady; and if you look in the "Baronetage" to the pedigree of the Pash family, you may see manuscript notes by Mrs. Frank Berry, relative to them and herself. Thus, when you see in print that Sir John Pash married Angelica, daughter of Graves Catacomb, Esq., in a neat hand you find written, *and sister of the late Sir George Catacomb, of Baker Street, Portman Square:* "A. B." follows of course. It is a wonder how fond ladies are of writing in books and signing their charming initials! Mrs. Berry's before-mentioned little gilt books are scored with pencil-marks, or occasionally at the margin with a !—note of interjection, or the words "*Too true, A. B.*" and so on. Much may be learned with regard to lovely woman by a look at the books she reads in; and I had gained no inconsiderable knowledge of Mrs. Berry by the ten minutes spent in the drawing-room, while she was at her toilet in the adjoining bed-chamber.

"You have often heard me talk of George Fitz," says Berry, with an appealing look to madame.

"Very often," answered his lady, in a tone which clearly meant "a great deal too much." "Pray, sir," continued she, looking at my boots with all her might, "are we to have your company at dinner?"

"Of course you are, my dear; what else do you think he came for? You would not have the man go back to Paris to get his evening coat, would you?"

"At least, my love, I hope you will go and put on *yours*, and change those muddy boots. Lady Pash will be here in five minutes, and you know Dobus is as punctual as clock-work." Then turning to me with a sort of apology that was as consoling as a box on the ear, "We have some friends at dinner, sir, who are rather particular persons; but I am sure when they hear that you only came on a sudden invitation, they will excuse your morning dress.—Bah, what a smell of smoke!"

With this speech madame placed herself majestically on a sofa, put out her foot, called Fido, and relapsed into an icy silence. Frank had long since evacuated the premises, with a rueful look at his wife, but never daring to cast a glance at me. I saw the whole business at once; here was this lion of a fellow tamed down by a she Van Amburgh, and fetching and carrying at her orders a great deal more obediently than her little yowling, black-muzzled darling of a Fido.

I am not, however, to be tamed so easily, and was determined in this instance not to be in the least disconcerted, or to show the smallest sign of ill-humour: so to *renouer* the conversation, I began about Lady Pash.

"I heard you mention the name of Pash, I think?" said I. "I know a lady of that name, and a very ugly one it is too."

"It is most probably not the same person," answered Mrs. Berry, with a look which intimated that a fellow like me could never have had the honour to know so exalted a person.

"I mean old Lady Pash of Hampton Court. Fat woman—fair, ain't she?—and wears an amethyst in her forehead, has one eye, a blond wig, and dresses in light green?"

"Lady Pash, sir, is MY AUNT," answered Mrs. Berry (not altogether displeased, although she expected money from the old lady; but you know we love to hear our friends abused when it can be safely done).

"Oh, indeed! she was a daughter of old Catacomb's of Windsor, I remember, the undertaker. They called her husband Callipash, and her ladyship Pishpash. So you see, madam, that I know the whole family!"

"Mr. Fitz-Simons!" exclaimed Mrs. Berry, rising, "I am not accustomed to hear nicknames applied to myself and my family; and must beg you, when you honour us with your company, to spare our

feelings as much as possible. Mr. Catacomb had the confidence of his SOVEREIGN, sir, and Sir John Pash was of Charles II.'s creation. The one was my uncle, sir, the other my grandfather!"

"My dear madam, I am extremely sorry, and most sincerely apologize for my inadvertence. But you owe me an apology too: my name is not Fitz-Simons, but Fitz-Boodle."

"What! of Boodle Hall—my husband's old friend; of Charles I.'s creation? My dear sir, I beg you a thousand pardons, and am delighted to welcome a person of whom I have heard Frank say so much. Frank!" (to Berry, who soon entered in very glossy boots and a white waistcoat), "do you know, darling, I mistook Mr. Fitz-Boodle for Mr. Fitz-Simons—that horrid Irish horse-dealing person; and I never, never, never can pardon myself for being so rude to him."

The big eyes here assumed an expression that was intended to kill me outright with kindness: from being calm, still, reserved, Angelica suddenly became gay, smiling, confidential, and *folâtre*. She told me she had heard I was a sad creature, and that she intended to reform me, and that I must come and see Frank a great deal.

Now, although Mr. Fitz-Simons, for whom I was mistaken, is as low a fellow as ever came out of Dublin, and having been a captain in somebody's army, is now a black-leg and horse-dealer by profession; yet if I had brought him home to Mrs. Fitz-Boodle to dinner, I should have liked far better that that imaginary lady should have received him with decent civility, and not insulted the stranger within her husband's gates. And, although it was delightful to be received so cordially when the mistake was discovered, yet I found that *all* Berry's old acquaintances were by no means so warmly welcomed; for another old school-chum presently made his appearance, who was treated in a very different manner.

This was no other than poor Jack Butts, who is a sort of small artist and picture-dealer by profession, and was a day-boy at Slaughter House when we were there, and very serviceable in bringing in sausages, pots of pickles, and other articles of merchandise, which we could not otherwise procure. The poor fellow has been employed, seemingly, in the same office of fetcher and carrier ever since; and occupied that post for Mrs. Berry. It was, "Mr. Butts, have you finished that drawing for Lady Pash's album?" and Butts produced it; and, "Did you match the silk for me at Delille's?" and there was the silk, bought, no doubt, with the poor fellow's last five francs; and, "Did you go to the furniture-man in the Rue St. Jacques; and bring the canary-seed, and call about my shawl at that odious,

dawdling Madame Fichet's; and have you brought the guitar-strings?"

Butts hadn't brought the guitar-strings; and thereupon Mrs. Berry's countenance assumed the same terrible expression which I had formerly remarked in it, and which made me tremble for Berry.

"My dear Angelica," though said he with some spirit, "Jack Butts isn't a baggage-waggon, nor a Jack-of-all-trades; you make him paint pictures for your women's albums, and look after your upholsterer, and your canary-bird, and your milliners, and turn rusty because he forgets your last message."

"I did not turn *rusty*, Frank, as you call it elegantly. I'm very much obliged to Mr. Butts for performing my commissions—very much obliged. And as for not paying for the pictures to which you so kindly allude, Frank, *I* should never have thought of offering payment for so paltry a service; but I'm sure I shall be happy to pay if Mr. Butts will send me in his bill."

"By Jove, Angelica, this is too much!" bounced out Berry; but the little matrimonial squabble was abruptly ended, by Berry's French man flinging open the door and announcing MILADI PASH and Doctor Dobus, which two personages made their appearance.

The person of old Pash has been already parenthetically described. But quite different from her dismal niece in temperament, she is as jolly an old widow as ever wore weeds. She was attached somehow to the court, and has a multiplicity of stories about the princesses and the old king, to which Mrs. Berry never fails to call your attention in her grave, important way. Lady Pash has ridden many a time to the Windsor hounds; she made her husband become a member of the Four-in-hand Club, and has numberless stories about Sir Godfrey Webster, Sir John Lade, and the old heroes of those times. She has lent a rouleau to Dick Sheridan, and remembers Lord Byron when he was a sulky, slim young lad. She says Charles Fox was the pleasantest fellow she ever met with, and has not the slightest objection to inform you that one of the princes was very much in love with her. Yet somehow she is only fifty-two years old, and I have never been able to understand her calculation. One day or other before her eye went out, and before those pearly teeth of hers were stuck to her gums by gold, she must have been a pretty-looking body enough. Yet in spite of the latter inconvenience, she eats and drinks too much every day, and tosses off a glass of maraschino with a trembling, pudgy hand, every finger of which twinkles with a dozen, at least, of old rings. She has a story about every one of those rings, and a stupid one too.

But there is always something pleasant, I think, in stupid family stories: they are good-hearted people who tell them.

As for Mrs. Muchit, nothing need be said of her; she is Pash's companion, she has lived with Lady Pash since the peace. Nor does my lady take any more notice of her than of the dust of the earth. She calls her "poor Muchit," and considers her a half-witted creature. Mrs. Berry hates her cordially, and thinks she is a designing toad-eater, who has formed a conspiracy to rob her of her aunt's fortune. She never spoke a word to poor Muchit during the whole of dinner, or offered to help her to anything on the table.

In respect to Dobus, he is an old Peninsular man, as you are made to know before you have been very long in his company; and, like most army surgeons, is a great deal more military in his looks and conversation, than the combatant part of the forces. He has adopted the sham-Duke-of-Wellington air, which is by no means uncommon in veterans; and though one of the easiest and softest fellows in existence, speaks slowly and briefly, and raps out an oath or two occasionally, as it is said a certain great captain does. Besides the above, we sat down to table with Captain Goff, late of the —— Highlanders; the Rev. Lemuel Whey, who preaches at St. Germains; little Cutler, and the Frenchman, who always *will* be at English parties on the Continent, and who, after making some frightful efforts to speak English, subsides and is heard no more. Young married ladies and heads of families generally have him for the purpose of waltzing, and in return he informs his friends of the club or the *café* that he has made the conquest of a *charmante Anglaise.* Listen to me, all family men who read this! and never *let an unmarried Frenchman into your doors.* This lecture alone is worth the price of the book. It is not that they do any harm in one case out of a thousand, heaven forbid! but they mean harm. They look on our Susannahs with unholy, dishonest eyes. Hearken to two of the grinning rogues chattering together as they clink over the asphalte of the Boulevard with lacquered boots, and plastered hair, and waxed moustaches, and turned-down shirt-collars, and stays and goggling eyes, and hear how they talk of a good, simple, giddy, vain, dull Baker Street creature, and canvass her points, and show her letters, and insinuate—never mind, but I tell you my soul grows angry when I think of the same; and I can't hear of an Englishwoman marrying a Frenchman, without feeling a sort of shame and pity for her.*

* Every person who has lived abroad, can, of course, point out a score of honourable exceptions to the case above hinted at, and knows many such

To return to the guests. The Rev. Lemuel Whey is a tea-party man, with a curl on his forehead and a scented pocket-handkerchief. He ties his white neckcloth to a wonder, and I believe sleeps in it. He brings his flute with him; and prefers Handel, of course; but has one or two pet profane songs of the sentimental kind, and will occasionally lift up his little pipe in a glee. He does not dance, but the honest fellow would give the world to do it; and he leaves his clogs in the passage, though it is a wonder he wears them, for in the muddiest weather he never has a speck on his foot. He was at St. John's College, Cambridge, and was rather gay for a term or two, he says. He is, in a word, full of the milk-and-water of human kindness, and his family lives near Hackney.

As for Goff, he has a huge, shining, bald forehead, and immense bristling, Indian-red whiskers. He wears white wash-leather gloves, drinks fairly, likes a rubber, and has a story for after dinner, beginning, "Doctor, ye racklackt Sandy M'Lellan, who joined us in the West Indies. Wal, sir," &c. These and little Cutler made up the party.

Now it may not have struck all readers, but any sharp fellow conversant with writing must have found out long ago, that if there had been something exceedingly interesting to narrate with regard to this dinner at Frank Berry's, I should have come out with it a couple of pages since, nor have kept the public looking for so long a time at the dish-covers and ornaments of the table.

But the simple fact must now be told, that there was nothing of the slightest importance occurred at this repast, except that it gave me an opportunity of studying Mrs. Berry in many different ways; and, in spite of the extreme complaisance which she now showed me, of forming, I am sorry to say, a most unfavourable opinion of that fair lady. Truth to tell, I would much rather she should have been civil to Mrs. Muchit, than outrageously complimentary to your humble servant; and as she professed not to know what on earth there was for dinner, would it not have been much more natural for her not to frown; and bob, and wink, and point, and pinch her lips as often as Monsieur Anatole, her French domestic, not knowing the ways of English dinner-tables, placed anything out of its due order? The allusions to Boodle Hall were innumerable, and I don't know any greater

unions in which it is the Frenchman who honours the English lady by marrying her. But it must be remembered that marrying in France means commonly *fortune-hunting:* and as for the respect in which marriage is held in France, let all the French novels in M. Rolandi's library be perused by those who wish to come to a decision upon the question.

bore than to be obliged to talk of a place which belongs to one's elder brother. Many questions were likewise asked about the dowager and her Scotch relatives, the Plumduffs, about whom Lady Pash knew a great deal, having seen them at court and at Lord Melville's. Of course she had seen them at court and at Lord Melville's, as she might have seen thousands of Scotchmen besides; but what mattered it to me, who care not a jot for old Lady Fitz-Boodle? "When you write, you'll say you met an old friend of her ladyship's," says Mrs. Berry, and I faithfully promised I would when I wrote; but if the New Post Office paid us for writing letters (as very possibly it will soon), I could not be bribed to send a line to old Lady Fitz.

In a word I found that Berry, like many simple fellows before him, had made choice of an imperious, ill-humoured, and underbred female for a wife, and could see with half an eye that he was a great deal toc much her slave.

The struggle was not over yet, however. Witness that little encounter before dinner; and once or twice the honest fellow replied rather smartly during the repast, taking especial care to atone as much as possible for his wife's inattention to Jack and Mrs. Muchit, by particular attention to those personages, whom he helped to everything round about and pressed perpetually to champagne; he drank but little himself, for his amiable wife's eye was constantly fixed on him.

Just at the conclusion of the dessert, madame, who had *boudéd* Berry during dinner-time, became particularly gracious to her lord and master, and tenderly asked me if I did not think the French custom was a good one, of men leaving table with the ladies.

"Upon my word, ma'am," says I, "I think it's a most abominable practice."

"And so do I," says Cutler.

"A most abominable practice! Do you hear *that?*" cries Berry, laughing, and filling his glass.

"I'm sure, Frank, when we are alone you always come to the drawing-room," replies the lady, sharply.

"Oh, yes! when we're alone, darling," says Berry, blushing; "but now we're *not* alone—ha, ha! Anatole, du Bordeaux!"

"I'm sure they sat after the ladies at Carlton House; didn't they, Lady Pash?" says Dobus, who likes his glass.

"*That* they did!" says my lady, giving him a jolly nod.

"I racklackt," exclaims Captain Goff, "when I was in the Mauritius, that Mestress MacWhirter, who commanded the Saxty-

Sackond, used to say, 'Mac, if ye want to get lively, ye'll not stop for more than two hours after the leddies have laft ye: if ye want to get drunk, ye'll just dine at the mass.' So ye see, Mestress Barry, what was Mac's allowance—haw, haw! Mester Whey, I'll trouble ye for the o-lives."

But although we were in a clear majority, that indomitable woman, Mrs. Berry, determined to make us all as uneasy as possible, and would take the votes all round. Poor Jack, of course, sided with her, and Whey said he loved a cup of tea and a little music better than all the wine of Bordeaux. As for the Frenchman, when Mrs. Berry said, "And what do you think, M. le Vicomte?"

"Vat you speak?" said M. de Blagueval, breaking silence for the first time during two hours; "yase—eh? to me you speak?"

"*Apry deeny, aimy-voo ally avec les dam?*"

"*Comment avec les dames?*"

"*Ally avec les dam com a Parry, ou resty avec les Messew com on Onglyterre?*"

"*Ah, madame! vous me le démandez?*" cries the little wretch, starting up in a theatrical way, and putting out his hand, which Mrs. Berry took, and with this the ladies left the room. Old Lady Pash trotted after her niece with her hand in Whey's, very much wondering at such practices, which were not in the least in vogue in the reign of George III.

Mrs. Berry cast a glance of triumph at her husband, at the defection; and Berry was evidently annoyed that three-eighths of his male forces had left him.

But fancy our delight and astonishment, when in a minute they all three came back again; the Frenchman looking entirely astonished, and the parson and the painter both very queer. The fact is, old downright Lady Pash, who had never been in Paris in her life before, and had no notion of being deprived of her usual hour's respite and nap, said at once to Mrs. Berry, "My dear Angelica, you're surely not going to keep these three men here? Send them back to the dining-room, for I've a thousand things to say to you." And Angelica, who expects to inherit her aunt's property, of course did as she was bid; on which the old lady fell into an easy chair, and fell asleep immediately,—so soon, that is, as the shout caused by the reappearance of the three gentlemen in the dining-room had subsided.

I had meanwhile had some private conversation with little Cutler regarding the character of Mrs. Berry. "She's a regular screw," whispered he; "a regular Tartar. Berry shows fight, though, some-

times, and I've known him have his own way for a week together. After dinner he is his own master, and hers when he has had his share of wine; and that's why she will never allow him to drink any."

Was it a wicked or was it a noble and honourable thought which came to us both at the same minute, to rescue Berry from his captivity? The ladies, of course, will give their verdict according to their gentle natures; but I know what men of courage will think, and by their jovial judgment will abide.

We received, then, the three lost sheep back into our innocent fold again with the most joyous shouting and cheering. We made Berry (who was, in truth, nothing loth) order up I don't know how much more claret. We obliged the Frenchman to drink *malgré lui*, and in the course of a short time we had poor Whey in such a state of excitement, that he actually volunteered to sing a song, which he said he had heard at some very gay supper-party at Cambridge, and which begins:—

"A pye sat on a pear-tree,
A pye sat on a pear-tree,
A pye sat on a pear-tree,
Heigh-ho, heigh-ho, heigh-ho!"

Fancy Mrs. Berry's face as she looked in, in the midst of that Bacchanalian ditty, when she saw no less a person than the Rev. Lemuel Whey carolling it!

"Is it you, my dear?" cries Berry, as brave now as any Petruchio. "Come in, and sit down, and hear Whey's song."

"Lady Pash is asleep, Frank," said she.

"Well, darling! that's the very reason. Give Mrs. Berry a glass, Jack, will you?"

"Would you wake your aunt, sir?" hissed out madam.

"*Never mind me, love! I'm awake, and like it!*" cried the venerable Lady Pash from the *salon*. "Sing away, gentlemen!"

At which we all set up an audacious cheer; and Mrs. Berry flounced back to the drawing-room, but did not leave the door open, that her aunt might hear our melodies.

Berry had by this time arrived at that confidential state to which a third bottle always brings the well-regulated mind; and he made a clean confession to Cutler and myself of his numerous matrimonial annoyances. He was not allowed to dine out, he said, and but seldom to ask his friends to meet him at home. He never dared smoke a cigar for the life of him, not even in the stables. He spent the mornings dawdling in eternal shops, the evenings at endless

tea-parties, or in reading poems or missionary tracts to his wife. He was compelled to take physic whenever she thought he looked a little pale, to change his shoes and stockings whenever he came in from a walk. "Look here," said he, opening his chest, and shaking his fist at Dobus; "look what Angelica and that infernal Dobus have brought me to."

I thought it might be a flannel waistcoat into which madam had forced him: but it was worse: I give you my word of honour it was a *pitch-plaster!*

We all roared at this, and the doctor as loud as any one; but he vowed that he had no hand in the pitch-plaster. It was a favourite family remedy of the late apothecary, Sir George Catacomb, and had been put on by Mrs. Berry's own fair hands.

When Anatole came in with coffee, Berry was in such high courage, that he told him to go to the deuce with it; and we never caught sight of Lady Pash more, except when, muffled up to the nose, she passed through the *salle-à-manger* to go to her carriage, in which Dobus and the parson were likewise to be transported to Paris. "Be a man, Frank," says she, "and hold your own"—for the good old lady had taken her nephew's part in the matrimonial business—"and you, Mr. Fitz-Boodle, come and see him often. You're a good fellow, take old one-eyed Callipash's word for it. Shall I take you to Paris?"

Dear, kind Angelica, she had told her aunt all I said!

"Don't go, George," says Berry, squeezing me by the hand. So I said I was going to sleep at Versailles that night; but if she would give a convoy to Jack Butts, it would be conferring a great obligation on him; with which favour the old lady accordingly complied, saying to him, with great coolness, "Get up and sit with John in the rumble, Mr. What-d'ye-call-'im." The fact is, the good old soul despises an artist as much as she does a tailor.

Jack tripped to his place very meekly; and "Remember Saturday," cried the doctor; and "Don't forget Thursday," exclaimed the divine, —"a bachelor's party, you know." And so the cavalcade drove thundering down the gloomy old Avenue de Paris.

The Frenchman, I forgot to say, had gone away exceedingly ill long before; and the reminiscences of "Thursday" and "Saturday" evoked by Dobus and Whey, were, to tell the truth, parts of our conspiracy; for in the heat of Berry's courage, we had made him promise to dine with us all round *en garçon;* with all except Captain Goff, who "racklacted" that he was engaged every day for the next three weeks: as indeed he is, to a thirty-sous ordinary which the gallant officer frequents, when not invited elsewhere.

Cutler and I then were the last on the field; and though we were for moving away, Berry, whose vigour had, if possible, been excited by the bustle and colloquy in the night air, insisted upon dragging us back again, and actually proposed a grill for supper!

We found in the *salle-à-manger* a strong smell of an extinguished lamp, and Mrs. Berry was snuffing out the candles on the sideboard.

"Hullo, my dear!" shouts Berry: "easy, if you please! we've not done yet!"

"Not done yet, Mr. Berry!" groans the lady, in a hollow, sepulchral tone.

"No, Mrs. B., not done yet. We are going to have some supper, ain't we, George?"

"I think it's quite time to go home," said Mr. Fitz-Boodle (who, to say the truth, began to tremble himself).

"I think it is, sir; you are quite right, sir; you will pardon me, gentlemen, I have a bad headache, and will retire."

"Good-night, my dear!" said that audacious Berry. "Anatole, tell the cook to broil a fowl and bring some wine."

If the loving couple had been alone, or if Cutler had not been an attaché to the embassy, before whom she was afraid of making herself ridiculous, I am confident that Mrs. Berry would have fainted away on the spot; and that all Berry's courage would have tumbled down lifeless by the side of her. So she only gave a martyrised look, and left the room; and while we partook of the very unnecessary repast, was good enough to sing some hymn tunes to an exceedingly slow movement in the next room, intimating that she was awake, and that, though suffering, she found her consolations in religion.

These melodies did not in the least add to our friend's courage. The devilled fowl had, somehow, no devil in it. The champagne in the glasses looked exceedingly flat and blue. The fact is, that Cutler and I were now both in a state of dire consternation, and soon made a move for our hats, and lighting each a cigar in the hall, made across the little green where the Cupids and nymphs were listening to the dribbling fountain in the dark.

"I'm hanged if I don't have a cigar too!" says Berry, rushing after us; and accordingly putting in his pocket a key about the size of a shovel, which hung by the little handle of the outer grille, forth he sallied, and joined us in our fumigation.

He stayed with us a couple of hours, and returned homewards in perfect good spirits, having given me his word of honour he would dine with us the next day. He put his immense key into the

grille, and unlocked it; but the gate would not open: *it was bolted within.*

He began to make a furious jangling and ringing at the bell; and in oaths, both French and English, called upon the recalcitrant Anatole.

After much tolling of the bell, a light came cutting across the crevices of the inner door; it was thrown open, and a figure appeared with a lamp,—a tall, slim figure of a woman, clothed in white from head to foot.

It was Mrs. Berry, and when Cutler and I saw her, we both ran away as fast as our legs could carry us.

Berry, at this, shrieked with a wild laughter. "Remember to-morrow, old boys," shouted he,—"six o'clock;" and we were a quarter of a mile off when the gate closed, and the little mansion of the Avenue de Paris was once more quiet and dark.

The next afternoon, as we were playing at billiards, Cutler saw Mrs. Berry drive by in her carriage; and as soon as rather a long rubber was over, I thought I would go and look for our poor friend, and so went down to the Pavilion. Every door was open, as the wont is in France, and I walked in unannounced, and saw this:

He was playing a duet with her on the flute. She had been out but for half-an-hour, after not speaking all the morning; and having seen Cutler at the billiard-room window, and suspecting we might take advantage of her absence, she had suddenly returned home again, and had flung herself, weeping, into her Frank's arms, and said she could not bear to leave him in anger. And so, after sitting for a little while sobbing on his knee, she had forgotten and forgiven every thing!

The dear angel! I met poor Frank in Bond Street only yesterday; but he crossed over to the other side of the way. He had on goloshes, and is grown very fat and pale. He has shaved off his moustaches, and instead, wears a respirator. He has taken his name off all his clubs, and lives very grimly in Baker Street. Well, ladies, no doubt you say he is right: and what are the odds, so long as *you* are happy?

DENNIS HAGGARTY'S WIFE.

THERE was an odious Irishwoman who with her daughter used to frequent the "Royal Hotel" at Leamington some years ago, and who went by the name of Mrs. Major Gam. Gam had been a distinguished officer in his Majesty's service, whom nothing but death and his own amiable wife could overcome. The widow mourned her husband in the most becoming bombazeen she could muster, and had at least half-an-inch of lampblack round the immense visiting-tickets which she left at the houses of the nobility and gentry her friends.

Some of us, I am sorry to say, used to call her Mrs. Major Gammon; for if the worthy widow had a propensity, it was to talk largely of herself and family (of her own family, for she held her husband's very cheap), and of the wonders of her paternal mansion, Molloyville, county of Mayo. She was of the Molloys of that county; and though I never heard of the family before, I have little doubt, from what Mrs. Major Gam stated, that they were the most ancient and illustrious family of that part of Ireland. I remember there came down to see his aunt a young fellow with huge red whiskers and tight nankeens, a green coat and an awful breastpin, who, after two days' stay at the Spa, proposed marriage to Miss S——, or, in default, a duel with her father; and who drove a flash curricle with a bay and a grey, and who was presented with much pride by Mrs. Gam as Castlereagh

Molloy of Molloyville. We all agreed that he was the most insufferable snob of the whole season, and were delighted when a bailiff came down in search of him.

Well, this is all I know personally of the Molloyville family; but at the house if you met the Widow Gam, and talked on any subject in life, you were sure to hear of it. If you asked her to have peas at dinner, she would say, "Oh, sir, after the peas at Molloyville, I really don't care for any others,—do I, dearest Jemima? We always had a dish in the month of June, when my father gave his head gardener a guinea (we had three at Molloyville), and sent him with his compliments and a quart of peas to our neighbour, dear Lord Marrowfat. What a sweet place Marrowfat Park is! isn't it, Jemima?" If a carriage passed by the window, Mrs. Major Gammon would be sure to tell you that there were three carriages at Molloyville, "the barouche, the chawiot, and the covered cyar." In the same manner she would favour you with the number and names of the footmen of the establishment; and on a visit to Warwick Castle (for this bustling woman made one in every party of pleasure that was formed from the hotel), she gave us to understand that the great walk by the river was altogether inferior to the principal avenue of Molloyville Park. I should not have been able to tell so much about Mrs. Gam and her daughter, but that, between ourselves, I was particularly sweet upon a young lady at the time, whose papa lived at the "Royal," and was under the care of Doctor Jephson.

The Jemima appealed to by Mrs. Gam in the above sentence was, of course, her daughter, apostrophized by her mother, "Jemima, my soul's darling!" or, "Jemima, my blessed child!" or, "Jemima, my own love!" The sacrifices that Mrs. Gam had made for that daughter were, she said, astonishing. The money she had spent in masters upon her, the illnesses through which she had nursed her, the ineffable love the mother bore her, were only known to heaven, Mrs. Gam said. They used to come into the room with their arms round each other's waists: at dinner between the courses the mother would sit with one hand locked in her daughter's; and if only two or three young men were present at the time, would be pretty sure to kiss her Jemima more than once during the time whilst the bohea was poured out.

As for Miss Gam, if she was not handsome, candour forbids me to say she was ugly. She was neither one nor t'other. She was a person who wore ringlets and a band round her forehead; she knew four

songs, which became rather tedious at the end of a couple of months' acquaintance; she had excessively bare shoulders; she inclined to wear numbers of cheap ornaments, rings, brooches, *ferronières*, smelling-bottles, and was always, we thought, very smartly dressed: though old Mrs. Lynx hinted that her gowns and her mother's were turned over and over again, and that her eyes were almost put out by darning stockings.

These eyes Miss Gam had very large, though rather red and weak, and used to roll them about at every eligible unmarried man in the place. But though the widow subscribed to all the balls, though she hired a fly to go to the meet of the hounds, though she was constant at church, and Jemima sang louder than any person there except the clerk, and though, probably, any person who made her a happy husband would be invited down to enjoy the three footmen, gardeners, and carriages at Molloyville, yet no English gentleman was found sufficiently audacious to propose. Old Lynx used to say that the pair had been at Tunbridge, Harrogate, Brighton, Ramsgate, Cheltenham, for this eight years past; where they had met, it seemed, with no better fortune. Indeed, the widow looked rather high for her blessed child: and as she looked with the contempt which no small number of Irish people feel upon all persons who get their bread by labour or commerce; and as she was a person whose energetic manners, costume, and brogue were not much to the taste of quiet English country gentlemen, Jemima—sweet, spotless flower,—still remained on her hands, a thought withered, perhaps, and seedy.

Now, at this time, the 120th Regiment was quartered at Weedon Barracks, and with the corps was a certain Assistant-Surgeon Haggarty, a large, lean, tough, raw-boned man, with big hands, knock-knees, and carroty whiskers, and, withal, as honest a creature as ever handled a lancet. Haggarty, as his name imports, was of the very same nation as Mrs. Gam, and, what is more, the honest fellow had some of the peculiarities which belonged to the widow, and bragged about his family almost as much as she did. I do not know of what particular part of Ireland they were kings, but monarchs they must have been, as have been the ancestors of so many thousand Hibernian families; but they had been men of no small consideration in Dublin, "where my father," Haggarty said, "is as well known as King William's statue, and where he 'rowls his carriage, too,' let me tell ye."

Hence, Haggarty was called by the wags "Rowl the carriage," and several of them made inquiries of Mrs. Gam regarding him: "Mrs. Gam, when you used to go up from Molloyville to the Lord Lieutenant's

balls, and had your town-house in Fitzwilliam Square, used you to meet the famous Doctor Haggarty in society?"

"Is it Surgeon Haggarty of Gloucester Street ye mean? The black Papist! D'ye suppose that the Molloys would sit down to table with a creature of that sort?"

"Why, isn't he the most famous physician in Dublin, and doesn't he rowl his carriage there?"

"The horrid wretch! He keeps a shop, I tell ye, and sends his sons out with the medicine. He's got four of them off into the army, Ulick and Phil, and Terence and Denny, and now it's Charles that takes out the physic. But how should I know about these odious creatures? Their mother was a Burke, of Burke's Town, county Cavan, and brought Surgeon Haggarty two thousand pounds. She was a Protestant; and I am surprised how she could have taken up with a horrid, odious, Popish apothecary!"

From the extent of the widow's information, I am led to suppose that the inhabitants of Dublin are not less anxious about their neighbours than are the natives of English cities; and I think it is very probable that Mrs. Gam's account of the young Haggartys who carried out the medicine is perfectly correct, for a lad in the 120th made a caricature of Haggarty coming out of a chemist's shop with an oil-cloth basket under his arm, which set the worthy surgeon in such a fury that there would have been a duel between him and the ensign, could the fiery doctor have had his way.

Now, Dionysius Haggarty was of an exceedingly inflammable temperament, and it chanced that of all the invalids, the visitors, the young squires of Warwickshire, the young manufacturers from Birmingham, the young officers from the barracks—it chanced, unluckily for Miss Gam and himself, that he was the only individual who was in the least smitten by her personal charms. He was very tender and modest about his love, however, for it must be owned that he respected Mrs. Gam hugely, and fully admitted, like a good simple fellow as he was, the superiority of that lady's birth and breeding to his own. How could he hope that he, a humble assistant-surgeon, with a thousand pounds his aunt Kitty left him for all his fortune,—how could he hope that one of the race of Molloyville would ever condescend to marry him?

Inflamed, however, by love, and inspired by wine, one day at a picnic at Kenilworth, Haggarty, whose love and raptures were the talk of the whole regiment, was induced by his waggish comrades to make a proposal in form.

"Are you aware, Mr. Haggarty, that you are speaking to a Molloy?" was all the reply majestic Mrs. Gam made when, according to the usual formula, the fluttering Jemima referred her suitor to "mamma." She left him with a look which was meant to crush the poor fellow to earth; she gathered up her cloak and bonnet, and precipitately called for her fly. She took care to tell every single soul in Leamington that the son of the odious Papist apothecary had had the audacity to propose for her daughter (indeed a proposal, coming from whatever quarter it may, does no harm), and left Haggarty in a state of extreme depression and despair.

His down-heartedness, indeed, surprised most of his acquaintances in and out of the regiment, for the young lady was no beauty, and a doubtful fortune, and Dennis was a man outwardly of an unromantic turn, who seemed to have a great deal more liking for beef-steak and whisky-punch than for women, however fascinating.

But there is no doubt this shy, uncouth, rough fellow had a warmer and more faithful heart hid within him than many a dandy who is as handsome as Apollo. I, for my part, never can understand why a man falls in love, and heartily give him credit for so doing, never mind with what or whom. *That* I take to be a point quite as much beyond an individual's own control as the catching of the small-pox or the colour of his hair. To the surprise of all, Assistant-Surgeon Dionysius Haggarty was deeply and seriously in love; and I am told that one day he very nearly killed the before-mentioned young ensign with a carving-knife, for venturing to make a second caricature, representing Lady Gammon and Jemima in a fantastical park, surrounded by three gardeners, three carriages, three footmen, and the covered cyar. He would have no joking concerning them. He became moody and quarrelsome of habit. He was for some time much more in the surgery and hospital than in the mess. He gave up the eating, for the most part, of those vast quantities of beef and pudding, for which his stomach used to afford such ample and swift accommodation; and when the cloth was drawn, instead of taking twelve tumblers, and singing Irish melodies, as he used to do, in a horrible cracked yelling voice, he would retire to his own apartment, or gloomily pace the barrack-yard, or madly whip and spur a grey mare he had on the road to Leamington, where his Jemima (although invisible for him) still dwelt.

The season at Leamington coming to a conclusion by the withdrawal of the young fellows who frequented that watering-place, the Widow Gam retired to her usual quarters for the other months of the year. Where these quarters were, I think we have no right to ask, for

I believe she had quarrelled with her brother at Molloyville, and besides, was a great deal too proud to be a burden on anybody.

Not only did the widow quit Leamington, but very soon afterwards the 120th received its marching orders, and left Weedon and Warwickshire. Haggarty's appetite was by this time partially restored, but his love was not altered, and his humour was still morose and gloomy. I am informed that at this period of his life he wrote some poems relative to his unhappy passion; a wild set of verses of several lengths, and in his handwriting, being discovered upon a sheet of paper in which a pitch-plaster was wrapped up, which Lieutenant and Adjutant Wheezer was compelled to put on for a cold.

Fancy then, three years afterwards, the surprise of all Haggarty's acquaintances on reading in the public papers the following announcement:—

"Married, at Monkstown on the 12th instant, Dionysius Haggarty, Esq., of H. M. 120th Foot, to Jemima Amelia Wilhelmina Molloy, daughter of the late Major Lancelot Gam, R.M., and granddaughter of the late, and niece of the present Burke Bodkin Blake Molloy, Esq., Molloyville, county Mayo."

"Has the course of true love at last begun to run smooth?" thought I, as I laid down the paper; and the old times, and the old leering, bragging widow, and the high shoulders of her daughter, and the jolly days with the 120th, and Doctor Jephson's one-horse chaise, and the Warwickshire hunt, and—and Louisa S——, but never mind *her*,—came back to my mind. Has that good-natured, simple fellow at last met with his reward? Well, if he has not to marry the mother-in-law too, he may get on well enough.

Another year announced the retirement of Assistant-Surgeon Haggarty from the 120th, where he was replaced by Assistant-Surgeon Angus Rothsay Leech, a Scotchman, probably; with whom I have not the least acquaintance, and who has nothing whatever to do with this little history.

Still more years passed on, during which time I will not say that I kept a constant watch upon the fortunes of Mr. Haggarty and his lady, for, perhaps, if the truth were known, I never thought for a moment about them; until one day, being at Kingstown, near Dublin, dawdling on the beach, and staring at the Hill of Howth, as most people at that watering-place do, I saw coming towards me a tall gaunt man, with a pair of bushy red whiskers, of which I thought I had seen the like in former years, and a face which could be no other

than Haggarty's. It was Haggarty, ten years older than when we last met, and greatly more grim and thin. He had on one shoulder a young gentleman in a dirty tartan costume, and a face exceedingly like his own peeping from under a battered plume of black feathers, while with his other hand he was dragging a light green go-cart, in which reposed a female infant of some two years old. Both were roaring with great power of lungs.

As soon as Dennis saw me, his face lost the dull, puzzled expression which had seemed to characterize it; he dropped the pole of the go-cart from one hand, and his son from the other, and came jumping forward to greet me with all his might, leaving his progeny roaring in the road.

"Bless my sowl," says he, "sure it's Fitz-Boodle? Fitz, don't you remember me? Dennis Haggarty of the 120th? Leamington, you know? Molloy, my boy, hould your tongue, and stop your screeching, and Jemima's too; d'ye hear? Well, it does good to sore eyes to see an old face. How fat you're grown, Fitz; and were ye ever in Ireland before? and a'n't ye delighted with it? Confess, now, isn't it beautiful?"

This question regarding the merits of their country, which I have remarked is put by most Irish persons, being answered in a satisfactory manner, and the shouts of the infants appeased from an apple-stall hard by, Dennis and I talked of old times; I congratulated him on his marriage with the lovely girl whom we all admired, and hoped he had a fortune with her, and so forth. His appearance, however, did not bespeak a great fortune: he had an old grey hat, short old trousers, an old waistcoat with regimental buttons, and patched Blucher boots, such as are not usually sported by persons in easy life.

"Ah!" says he, with a sigh, in reply to my queries, "times are changed since them days, Fitz-Boodle. My wife's not what she was —the beautiful creature you knew her. Molloy, my boy, run off in a hurry to your mamma, and tell her an English gentleman is coming home to dine; for you'll dine with me, Fitz, in course?" And I agreed to partake of that meal; though Master Molloy altogether declined to obey his papa's orders with respect to announcing the stranger.

"Well, I must announce you myself," said Haggarty, with a smile. "Come, it's just dinner-time, and my little cottage is not a hundred yards off." Accordingly, we all marched in procession to Dennis's little cottage, which was one of a row and a half of one-storied houses,

with little court-yards before them, and mostly with very fine names on the door-posts of each. "Surgeon Haggarty" was emblazoned on Dennis's gate, on a stained green copper-plate; and, not content with this, on the door-post above the bell was an oval with the inscription of "New Molloyville." The bell was broken, of course; the court, or garden-path, was mouldy, weedy, seedy; there were some dirty rocks, by way of ornament, round a faded glass-plat in the centre, some clothes and rags hanging out of most part of the windows of New Molloyville, the immediate entrance to which was by a battered scraper, under a broken trellis-work, up which a withered creeper declined any longer to climb.

"Small, but snug," says Haggarty: "I'll lead the way, Fitz; put your hat on the flower-pot there, and turn to the left into the drawing-room." A fog of onions and turf-smoke filled the whole of the house, and gave signs that dinner was not far off. Far off? You could hear it frizzling in the kitchen, where the maid was also endeavouring to hush the crying of a third refractory child. But as we entered, all three of Haggarty's darlings were in full roar.

"Is it you, Dennis?" cried a sharp raw voice, from a dark corner in the drawing-room to which we were introduced, and in which a dirty tablecloth was laid for dinner, some bottles of porter and a cold mutton-bone being laid out on a rickety grand-piano hard by. "Ye're always late, Mr. Haggarty. Have you brought the whisky from Nowlan's? I'll go bail ye've not now."

"My dear, I've brought an old friend of yours and mine to take pot-luck with us to-day," said Dennis.

"When is he to come?" said the lady. At which speech I was rather surprised, for I stood before her.

"Here he is, Jemima my love," answered Dennis, looking at me. "Mr. Fitz-Boodle; don't you remember him in Warwickshire, darling?"

"Mr. Fitz-Boodle! I am very glad to see him," said the lady, rising and curtseying with much cordiality.

Mrs. Haggarty was blind.

Mrs. Haggarty was not only blind, but it was evident that small-pox had been the cause of her loss of vision. Her eyes were bound with a bandage, her features were entirely swollen, scarred and distorted by the horrible effects of the malady. She had been knitting in a corner when we entered, and was wrapped in a very dirty bed-gown. Her voice to me was quite different to that in which she addressed her husband. She spoke to Haggarty in broad Irish: she

addressed me in that most odious of all languages—Irish-English, endeavouring to the utmost to disguise her brogue, and to speak with the true dawdling *distingué* English air.

"Are you long in I-a-land?" said the poor creature in this accent. "You must faind it a sad ba'ba'ous place, Mr. Fitz-Boodle, I'm shu-ah! It was vary kaind of you to come upon us *en famille*, and accept a dinner *sans cérémonie*. Mr. Haggarty, I hope you'll put the waine into aice, Mr. Fitz-Boodle must be melted with this hot weathah."

For some time she conducted the conversation in this polite strain, and I was obliged to say, in reply to a query of hers, that I did not find her the least altered, though I should never have recognized her but for this rencontre. She told Haggarty with a significant air to get the wine from the cellah, and whispered to me that he was his own butlah; and the poor fellow, taking the hint, scudded away into the town for a pound of beefsteak and a couple of bottles of wine from the tavern.

"Will the childhren get their potatoes and butther here?" said a barefoot girl, with long black hair flowing over her face, which she thrust in at the door.

"Let them sup in the nursery, Elizabeth, and send—ah! Edwards to me."

"Is it cook you mane, ma'am?" said the girl.

"Send her at once!" shrieked the unfortunate woman; and the noise of frying presently ceasing, a hot woman made her appearance, wiping her brows with her apron, and asking, with an accent decidedly Hibernian, what the misthress wanted.

"Lead me up to my dressing-room, Edwards: I really am not fit to be seen in this dishabille by Mr. Fitz-Boodle."

"Fait' I can't!" says Edwards; "sure the masther's out at the butcher's, and can't look to the kitchen-fire!"

"Nonsense, I must go!" cried Mrs. Haggarty; and so Edwards, putting on a resigned air, and giving her arm and face a further rub with her apron, held out her arm to Mrs. Dennis, and the pair went upstairs.

She left me to indulge my reflections for half-an-hour, at the end of which period she came downstairs dressed in an old yellow satin, with the poor shoulders exposed just as much as ever. She had mounted a tawdry cap, which Haggarty himself must have selected for her. She had all sorts of necklaces, bracelets, and earrings in gold, in garnets, in mother-of-pearl, in ormolu. She brought in a furious savour

of musk, which drove the odours of onions and turf-smoke before it; and she waved across her wretched, angular, mean, scarred features, an old cambric handkerchief with a yellow lace-border.

"And so you would have known me anywhere, Mr. Fitz-Boodle?" said she, with a grin that was meant to be most fascinating. "I was sure you would; for though my dreadful illness deprived me of my sight, it is a mercy that it did not change my features or complexion at all!"

This mortification had been spared the unhappy woman; but I don't know whether, with all her vanity, her infernal pride, folly, and selfishness, it was charitable to leave her in her error.

Yet why correct her? There is a quality in certain people which is above all advice, exposure, or correction. Only let a man or woman have DULNESS sufficient, and they need bow to no extant authority. A dullard recognizes no betters; a dullard can't see that he is in the wrong; a dullard has no scruples of conscience, no doubts of pleasing, or succeeding, or doing right; no qualms for other people's feelings, no respect but for the fool himself. How can you make a fool perceive that he is a fool? Such a personage can no more see his own folly than he can see his own ears. And the great quality of Dulness is to be unalterably contented with itself. What myriads of souls are there of this admirable sort,—selfish, stingy, ignorant, passionate, brutal; bad sons, mothers, fathers, never known to do kind actions!

To pause, however, in this disquisition, which was carrying us far off Kingstown, New Molloyville, Ireland,—nay, into the wide world wherever Dulness inhabits—let it be stated that Mrs. Haggarty, from my brief acquaintance with her and her mother, was of the order of persons just mentioned. There was an air of conscious merit about her, very hard to swallow along with the infamous dinner poor Dennis managed, after much delay, to get on the table. She did not fail to invite me to Molloyville, where she said her cousin would be charmed to see me; and she told me almost as many anecdotes about that place as her mother used to impart in former days. I observed, moreover, that Dennis cut her the favourite pieces of the beefsteak, that she ate thereof with great gusto, and that she drank with similar eagerness of the various strong liquors at table. "We Irish ladies are all fond of a leetle glass of punch," she said, with a playful air, and Dennis mixed her a powerful tumbler of such violent grog as I myself could swallow only with some difficulty. She talked of her suffering a great deal, of her sacrifices, of the luxuries to which she

had been accustomed before marriage,—in a word, of a hundred of those themes on which some ladies are in the custom of enlarging when they wish to plague some husbands.

But honest Dennis, far from being angry at this perpetual, wearisome, impudent recurrence to her own superiority, rather encouraged the conversation than otherwise. It pleased him to hear his wife discourse about her merits and family splendours. He was so thoroughly beaten down and henpecked, that he, as it were, gloried in his servitude, and fancied that his wife's magnificence reflected credit on himself. He looked towards me, who was half sick of the woman and her egotism, as if expecting me to exhibit the deepest sympathy, and flung me glances across the table as much as to say, "What a gifted creature my Jemima is, and what a fine fellow I am to be in possession of her!" When the children came down she scolded them, of course, and dismissed them abruptly (for which circumstance, perhaps, the writer of these pages was not in his heart very sorry), and, after having sat a preposterously long time, left us, asking whether we would have coffee there or in her boudoir.

"Oh! here, of course," said Dennis, with rather a troubled air, and in about ten minutes the lovely creature was led back to us again by "Edwards," and the coffee made its appearance. After coffee her husband begged her to let Mr. Fitz-Boodle hear her voice: "He longs for some of his old favourites."

"No! *do* you?" said she; and was led in triumph to the jingling old piano, and with a screechy, wiry voice, sung those very abominable old ditties which I had heard her sing at Leamington ten years back.

Haggarty, as she sang, flung himself back in the chair delighted. Husbands always are, and with the same song, one that they have heard when they were nineteen years old, probably; most Englishmen's tunes have that date, and it is rather affecting, I think, to hear an old gentleman of sixty or seventy quavering the old ditty that was fresh when *he* was fresh and in his prime. If he has a musical wife, depend on it he thinks her old songs of 1788 are better than any he has heard since: in fact he has heard *none* since. When the old couple are in high good-humour the old gentleman will take the old lady round the waist, and say, "My dear, do sing me one of your own songs," and she sits down and sings with her old voice, and, as she sings, the roses of her youth bloom again for a moment. Ranelagh resuscitates, and she is dancing a minuet in powder and a train.

This is another digression. It was occasioned by looking at poor Dennis's face while his wife was screeching (and, believe me, the

former was the more pleasant occupation). Bottom tickled by the fairies could not have been in greater ecstasies. He thought the music was divine; and had further reason for exulting in it, which was, that his wife was always in a good humour after singing, and never would sing but in that happy frame of mind. Dennis had hinted so much in our little colloquy during the ten minutes of his lady's absence in the "boudoir;" so, at the conclusion of each piece, we shouted "Bravo!" and clapped our hands like mad.

Such was my insight into the life of Surgeon Dionysius Haggarty and his wife; and I must have come upon him at a favourable moment too, for poor Dennis has spoken, subsequently, of our delightful evening at Kingstown, and evidently thinks to this day that his friend was fascinated by the entertainment there. His inward economy was as follows: he had his half pay, a thousand pounds, about a hundred a year that his father left, and his wife had sixty pounds a year from the mother; which the mother, of course, never paid. He had no practice, for he was absorbed in attention to his Jemima and the children, whom he used to wash, to dress, to carry out, to walk, or to ride, as we have seen, and who could not have a servant, as their dear blind mother could never be left alone. Mrs. Haggarty, a great invalid, used to lie in bed till one, and have breakfast and hot luncheon there. A fifth part of his income was spent in having her wheeled about in a chair, by which it was his duty to walk daily for an allotted number of hours. Dinner would ensue, and the amateur clergy, who abound in Ireland, and of whom Mrs. Haggarty was a great admirer, lauded her everywhere as a model of resignation and virtue, and praised beyond measure the admirable piety with which she bore her sufferings.

Well, every man to his taste. It did not certainly appear to me that *she* was the martyr of the family.

"The circumstances of my marriage with Jemima," Dennis said to me, in some after conversations we had on this interesting subject, "were the most romantic and touching you can conceive. You saw what an impression the dear girl had made upon me when we were at Weedon; for from the first day I set eyes on her, and heard her sing her delightful song of 'Dark-eyed Maiden of Araby,' I felt, and said to Turniquet of ours, that very night, that *she* was the dark-eyed maid of Araby for *me*,—not that she was, you know, for she was born in Shropshire. But I felt that I had seen the woman who was to make me happy or miserable for life. You know how I proposed for her at Kenilworth, and how I was rejected, and how I almost shot myself in

consequence,—no, you don't know that, for I said nothing about it to any one, but I can tell you it was a very near thing; and a very lucky thing for me I didn't do it: for,—would you believe it?—the dear girl was in love with me all the time."

"Was she really?" said I, who recollected that Miss Gam's love of those days showed itself in a very singular manner; but the fact is, when women are most in love they most disguise it.

"Over head and ears in love with poor Dennis," resumed that worthy fellow, "who'd ever have thought it? But I have it from the best authority, from her own mother, with whom I'm not over and above good friends now; but of this fact she assured me, and I'll tell you when and how.

"We were quartered at Cork three years after we were at Weedon, and it was our last year at home; and a great mercy that my dear girl spoke in time, or where should we have been *now?* Well, one day, marching home from parade, I saw a lady seated at an open window by another who seemed an invalid, and the lady at the window, who was dressed in the profoundest mourning, cried out, with a scream, 'Gracious heavens! it's Mr. Haggarty of the 120th.'

"'Sure I know that voice,' says I to Whiskerton.

"'It's a great mercy you don't know it a deal too well,' says he: 'it's Lady Gammon. She's on some husband-hunting scheme, depend on it, for that daughter of hers. She was at Bath last year on the same errand, and at Cheltenham the year before, where, heaven bless you! she's as well known as the "Hen and Chickens."'

"'I'll thank you not to speak disrespectfully of Miss Jemima Gam,' said I to Whiskerton; 'she's of one of the first families in Ireland, and whoever says a word against a woman I once proposed for, insults me,—do you understand?'

"'Well, marry her, if you like,' says Whiskerton, quite peevish: 'marry her, and be hanged!'

"Marry her! the very idea of it set my brain a-whirling, and made me a thousand times more mad than I am by nature.

"You may be sure I walked up the hill to the parade-ground that afternoon, and with a beating heart too. I came to the widow's house. It was called 'New Molloyville,' as this is. Wherever she takes a house for six months, she calls it 'New Molloyville;' and has had one in Mallow, in Bandon, in Sligo, in Castlebar, in Fermoy, in Drogheda, and the deuce knows where besides: but the blinds were down, and though I thought I saw somebody behind 'em, no notice was taken of poor Denny Haggarty, and I paced up and down all mess-time in

hopes of catching a glimpse of Jemima, but in vain. The next day I was on the ground again; I was just as much in love as ever, that's the fact. I'd never been in that way before, look you; and when once caught, I knew it was for life.

"There's no use in telling you how long I beat about the bush, but when I *did* get admittance to the house (it was through the means of young Castlereagh Molloy, whom you may remember at Leamington, and who was at Cork for the regatta, and used to dine at our mess, and had taken a mighty fancy to me)—when I *did* get into the house, I say, I rushed *in medias res* at once; I couldn't keep myself quiet, my heart was too full.

"Oh, Fitz! I shall never forget the day,—the moment I was inthrojuiced into the dthrawing-room" (as he began to be agitated, Dennis's brogue broke out with greater richness than ever; but though a stranger may catch, and repeat from memory, a few words, it is next to impossible for him to *keep up a conversation* in Irish, so that we had best give up all attempts to imitate Dennis). "When I saw old Mother Gam," said he, "my feelings overcame me all at once. I rowled down on the ground, sir, as if I'd been hit by a musket-ball. 'Dearest madam,' says I, 'I'll die if you don't give me Jemima.'

"'Heavens, Mr. Haggarty!' says she, 'how you seize me with surprise! Castlereagh, my dear nephew, had you not better leave us?' and away he went, lighting a cigar, and leaving me still on the floor.

"'Rise, Mr. Haggarty,' continued the widow. 'I will not attempt to deny that this constancy towards my daughter is extremely affecting, however sudden your present appeal may be. I will not attempt to deny that, perhaps, Jemima may have a similar feeling; but, as I said, I never could give my daughter to a Catholic.'

"'I'm as good a Protestant as yourself, ma'am,' says I; 'my mother was an heiress, and we were all brought up her way.'

"'That makes the matter very different,' says she, turning up the whites of her eyes. 'How could I ever have reconciled it to my conscience to see my blessed child married to a Papist? How could I ever have taken him to Molloyville? Well, this obstacle being removed, *I* must put myself no longer in the way between two young people. *I* must sacrifice myself; as I always have when my darling girl was in question. You shall see her, the poor dear, lovely, gentle sufferer, and learn your fate from her own lips.'

"'The sufferer, ma'am,' says I; 'has Miss Gam been ill?'

"'What! haven't you heard?' cried the widow. 'Haven't you heard of the dreadful illness which so nearly carried her from me?

For nine weeks, Mr. Haggarty, I watched her day and night, without taking a wink of sleep,—for nine weeks she lay trembling between death and life; and I paid the doctor eighty-three guineas. She is restored now; but she is the wreck of the beautiful creature she was. Suffering, and, perhaps, *another disappointment*—but we won't mention that *now*—have so pulled her down. But I will leave you, and prepare my sweet girl for this strange, this entirely unexpected visit.'

"I won't tell you what took place between me and Jemima, to whom I was introduced as she sat in the darkened room, poor sufferer! nor describe to you with what a thrill of joy I seized (after groping about for it) her poor emaciated hand. She did not withdraw it; I came out of that room an engaged man, sir; and *now* I was enabled to show her that I had always loved her sincerely, for there was my will, made three years back, in her favour: that night she refused me, as I told ye. I would have shot myself, but they'd have brought me in *non compos;* and my brother Mick would have contested the will, and so I determined to live, in order that she might benefit by my dying. I had but a thousand pounds then: since that my father has left me two more. I willed every shilling to her, as you may fancy, and settled it upon her when we married, as we did soon after. It was not for some time that I was allowed to see the poor girl's face, or, indeed, was aware of the horrid loss she had sustained. Fancy my agony, my dear fellow, when I saw that beautiful wreck!"

There was something not a little affecting to think, in the conduct of this brave fellow, that he never once, as he told his story, seemed to allude to the possibility of his declining to marry a woman who was not the same as the woman he loved; but that he was quite as faithful to her now, as he had been when captivated by the poor tawdry charms of the silly Miss of Leamington. It was hard that such a noble heart as this should be flung away upon yonder foul mass of greedy vanity. Was it hard, or not, that he should remain deceived in his obstinate humility, and continue to admire the selfish, silly being whom he had chosen to worship?

"I should have been appointed surgeon of the regiment," continued Dennis, "soon after, when it was ordered abroad to Jamaica, where it now is. But my wife would not hear of going, and said she would break her heart if she left her mother. So I retired on half-pay, and took this cottage; and in case any practice should fall in my way —why, there is my name on the brass plate, and I'm ready for anything that comes. But the only case that ever *did* come was one day when I was driving my wife in the chaise, and another, one night, of a

beggar with a broken head. My wife makes me a present of a baby every year, and we've no debts; and between you and me and the post, as long as my mother-in-law is out of the house, I'm as happy as I need be."

"What! you and the old lady don't get on well?" said I.

"I can't say we do; it's not in nature, you know," said Dennis, with a faint grin. "She comes into the house, and turns it topsy-turvy. When she's here I'm obliged to sleep in the scullery. She's never paid her daughter's income since the first year, though she brags about her sacrifices as if she had ruined herself for Jemima; and besides, when she's here, there's a whole clan of the Molloys, horse, foot, and dragoons, that are quartered upon us, and eat me out of house and home."

"And is Molloyville such a fine place as the widow described it?" asked I, laughing, and not a little curious.

"Oh, a mighty fine place entirely!" said Dennis. "There's the oak park of two hundred acres, the finest land ye ever saw, only they've cut all the wood down. The garden in the old Molloy's time, they say, was the finest ever seen in the West of Ireland; but they've taken all the glass to mend the house windows: and small blame to them either. There's a clear rent-roll of thirty-five hundred a year, only it's in the hand of receivers; besides other debts, for which there is no land security."

"Your cousin-in-law, Castlereagh Molloy, won't come into a large fortune?"

"Oh, he'll do very well," said Dennis. "As long as he can get credit, he's not the fellow to stint himself Faith, I was fool enough to put my name to a bit of paper for him, and as they could not catch him in Mayo, they laid hold of me at Kingstown here. And there was a pretty to do. Didn't Mrs. Gam say I was ruining her family, that's all? I paid it by instalments (for all my money is settled on Jemima); and Castlereagh, who's an honourable fellow, offered me any satisfaction in life. Anyhow, he couldn't do more than *that*."

"Of course not, and now you're friends?"

"Yes, and he and his aunt have had a tiff, too; and he abuses her properly, I warrant ye. He says that she carried about Jemima from place to place, and flung her at the head of every unmarried man in England a'most—my poor Jemima, and she all the while dying in love with me! As soon as she got over the small-pox—she took it at Fermoy—God bless her, I wish I'd been by to be her nurse-tender, —as soon as she was rid of it, the old lady said to Castlereagh,

'Castlereagh, go to the bar'cks, and find out in the Army List where the 120th is.' Off she came to Cork hot foot. It appears that while she was ill, Jemima's love for me showed itself in such a violent way that her mother was overcome, and promised that, should the dear child recover, she would try and bring us together. Castlereagh says she would have gone after us to Jamaica."

"I have no doubt she would," said I.

"Could you have a stronger proof of love than that?" cried Dennis. "My dear girl's illness and frightful blindness have, of course, injured her health and her temper. She cannot in her position look to the children, you know, and so they come under my charge for the most part; and her temper is unequal, certainly. But you see what a sensitive, refined, elegant creature she is, and may fancy that she's often put out by a rough fellow like me."

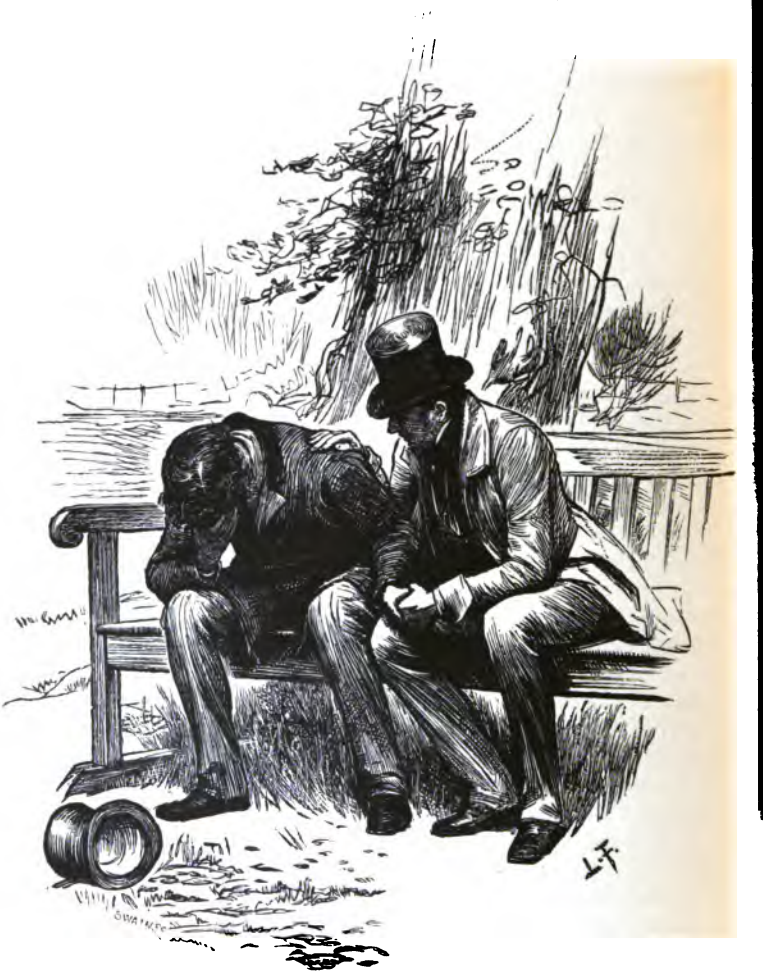
Here Dennis left me, saying it was time to go and walk out the children; and I think his story has matter of some wholesome reflection in it for bachelors who are about to change their condition, or may console some who are mourning their celibacy. Marry, gentlemen, if you like; leave your comfortable dinner at the club for cold-mutton and curl-papers at your home; give up your books or pleasures, and take to yourselves wives and children; but think well on what you do first, as I have no doubt you will after this advice and example. Advice is always useful in matters of love; men always take it; they always follow other people's opinions, not their own: they always profit by example. When they see a pretty woman, and feel the delicious madness of love coming over them, they always stop to calculate her temper, her money, their own money, or suitableness for the married life. . . . Ha, ha, ha! Let us fool in this way no more. I have been in love forty-three times with all ranks and conditions of women, and would have married every time if they would have let me. How many wives had King Solomon, the wisest of men? And is not that story a warning to us that Love is master of the wisest? It is only fools who defy him.

I must come, however, to the last, and perhaps the saddest, part of poor Denny Haggarty's history. I met him once more, and in such a condition as made me determine to write this history.

In the month of June last I happened to be at Richmond, a delightful little place of retreat; and there, sunning himself upon the terrace, was my old friend of the 120th: he looked older, thinner, poorer, and more wretched than I had ever seen him. "What! you have given up Kingstown?" said I, shaking him by the hand.

"Yes," says he.

"And is my lady and your family here at Richmond?"



"No," says he, with a sad shake of the head; and the poor fellow's hollow eyes filled with tears.

"Good heavens, Denny! what's the matter?" said I. He was squeezing my hand like a vice as I spoke.

"They've LEFT me!" he burst out with a dreadful shout of passionate grief—a horrible scream which seemed to be wrenched out of his heart. "Left me!" said he, sinking down on a seat, and clenching his great fists, and shaking his lean arms wildly. "I'm a wise man now, Mr. Fitz-Boodle. Jemima has gone away from me, and yet you know how I loved her, and how happy we were! I've got nobody now; but I'll die soon, that's one comfort: and to think it's she that'll kill me after all!"

The story, which he told with a wild and furious lamentation such as is not known among men of our cooler country, and such as I don't like now to recall, was a very simple one. The mother-in-law had taken possession of the house, and had driven him from it. His property at his marriage was settled on his wife. She had never loved him, and told him this secret at last, and drove him out of doors with her selfish scorn and ill temper. The boy had died; the girls were better, he said, brought up among the Molloys than they could be with him; and so he was quite alone in the world, and was living, or rather dying, on forty pounds a year.

His troubles are very likely over by this time. The two fools who caused his misery will never read this history of him; *they* never read godless stories in magazines: and I wish, honest reader, that you and I went to church as much as they do. These people are not wicked *because* of their religious observances, but *in spite* of them. They are too dull to understand humility, too blind to see a tender and simple heart under a rough ungainly bosom. They are sure that all their conduct towards my poor friend here has been perfectly righteous, and that they have given proofs of the most Christian virtue. Haggarty's wife is considered by her friends as a martyr to a savage husband, and her mother is the angel that has come to rescue her. All they did was to cheat him and desert him. And safe in that wonderful self-complacency with which the fools of this earth are endowed, they have not a single pang of conscience for their villany towards him, and consider their heartlessness as a proof and consequence of their spotless piety and virtue.

END OF "MEN'S WIVES."

THE BEDFORD-ROW CONSPIRACY

THE

BEDFORD-ROW CONSPIRACY.*

CHAPTER I.

OF THE LOVES OF MR. PERKINS AND MISS GORGON, AND OF THE TWO GREAT FACTIONS IN THE TOWN OF OLDBOROUGH.

"MY dear John," cried Lucy, with a very wise look indeed, "it must and shall be so. As for Doughty Street, with our means, a house is out of the question. We must keep three servants, and aunt Biggs says the taxes are one-and-twenty pounds a year."

"I have seen a sweet place at Chelsea," remarked John: "Paradise Row, No. 17,—garden — greenhouse — fifty pounds a year—omnibus to town within a mile."

"What! that I may be left alone all day, and you spend a fortune in driving backward and forward in those horrid breakneck cabs? My darling, I should die there—die of fright, I know I should. Did you not say yourself that the road was not as yet

* A story of Charles de Bernard furnished the plot of "The Bedford-Row Conspiracy."

lighted, and that the place swarmed with public-houses and dreadful tipsy Irish bricklayers? Would you kill me, John?"

"My da—arling," said John, with tremendous fondness, clutching Miss Lucy suddenly round the waist, and rapping the hand of that young person violently against his waistcoat,—"My—da—arling, don't say such things, even in a joke. If I objected to the chambers, it is only because you, my love, with your birth and connections, ought to have a house of your own. The chambers are quite large enough, and certainly quite good enough for me." And so after some more sweet parley on the part of these young people, it was agreed that they should take up their abode, when married, in a part of the House number One hundred and something, Bedford Row.

It will be necessary to explain to the reader that John was no other than John Perkins, Esq., of the Middle Temple, barrister-at-law, and that Miss Lucy was the daughter of the late Captain Gorgon, and Marianne Biggs, his wife. The Captain being of noble connections, younger son of a baronet, cousin to Lord X——, and related to the Y—— family, had angered all his relatives by marrying a very silly, pretty young woman, who kept a ladies'-school at Canterbury. She had six hundred pounds to her fortune, which the Captain laid out in the purchase of a sweet travelling-carriage and dressing-case for himself; and going abroad with his lady, spent several years in the principal prisons of Europe, in one of which he died. His wife and daughter were meantime supported by the contributions of Mrs. Jemima Biggs, who still kept the ladies'-school.

At last a dear old relative—such a one as one reads of in romances—died and left seven thousand pounds apiece to the two sisters, whereupon the elder gave up schooling and retired to London; and the younger managed to live with some comfort and decency at Brussels, upon two hundred and ten pounds per annum. Mrs. Gorgon never touched a shilling of her capital, for the very good reason that it was placed entirely out of her reach; so that when she died, her daughter found herself in possession of a sum of money that is not always to be met with in this world.

Her aunt the baronet's lady, and her aunt the ex-schoolmistress, both wrote very pressing invitations to her, and she resided with each for six months after her arrival in England. Now, for a second time, she had come to Mrs. Biggs, Caroline Place, Mecklenburgh Square. It was under the roof of that respectable old lady that John Perkins, Esq., being invited to take tea, wooed and won Miss Gorgon.

Having thus described the circumstances of Miss Gorgon's life

let us pass for a moment from that young lady, and lift up the veil of mystery which envelopes the deeds and character of Perkins.

Perkins, too, was an orphan; and he and his Lucy, of summer evenings, when Sol descending lingered fondly yet about the minarets of the Foundling, and gilded the grassplots of Mecklenburgh Square —Perkins, I say, and Lucy would often sit together in the summer-house of that pleasure-ground, and muse upon the strange coincidences of their life. Lucy was motherless and fatherless; so, too

was Perkins. If Perkins was brotherless and sisterless, was not Lucy likewise an only child? Perkins was twenty-three: his age and Lucy's united, amounted to forty-six; and it was to be remarked, as a fact still more extraordinary, that while Lucy's relatives were *aunts*. John's were *uncles*. Mysterious spirit of love! let us treat thee with respect and whisper not too many of thy secrets. The fact is, John and Lucy were a pair of fools (as every young couple *ought* to be who have hearts that are worth a farthing), and were ready to find

coincidences, sympathies, hidden gushes of feeling, mystic unions of the soul, and what not, in every single circumstance that occurred from the rising of the sun to the going down thereof, and in the intervals. Bedford Row, where Perkins lived, is not very far from Mecklenburgh Square; and John used to say that he felt a comfort that his house and Lucy's were served by the same muffin-man.

Further comment is needless. A more honest, simple, clever, warm-hearted, soft, whimsical, romantical, high-spirited young fellow than John Perkins did not exist. When his father, Doctor Perkins, died, this, his only son, was placed under the care of John Perkins, Esq., of the house of Perkins, Scully and Perkins, those celebrated attorneys in the trading town of Oldborough, which the second partner, William Pitt Scully, Esq., represented in Parliament and in London.

All John's fortune was the house in Bedford Row, which, at his father's death, was let out into chambers, and brought in a clear hundred a year. Under his uncle's roof at Oldborough, where he lived with thirteen red-haired male and female cousins, he was only charged fifty pounds for board, clothes, and pocket-money, and the remainder of his rents was carefully put by for him until his majority. When he approached that period—when he came to belong to two spouting-clubs at Oldborough, among the young merchants and lawyers'-clerks—to blow the flute nicely, and play a good game at billiards—to have written one or two smart things in the *Oldborough Sentinel*—to be fond of smoking (in which act he was discovered by his fainting aunt at three o'clock one morning)—in one word, when John Perkins arrived at manhood, he discovered that he was quite unfit to be an attorney, that he detested all the ways of his uncle's stern, dull, vulgar, regular, red-headed family, and he vowed that he would go to London and make his fortune. Thither he went, his aunt and cousins, who were all "serious," vowing that he was a lost boy; and when his history opens, John had been two years in the metropolis, inhabiting his own garrets; and a very nice compact set of apartments, looking into the back-garden, at this moment falling vacant, the prudent Lucy Gorgon had visited them, and vowed that she and her John should there commence housekeeping.

All these explanations are tedious, but necessary; and furthermore, it must be said, that as John's uncle's partner was the Liberal Member for Oldborough, so Lucy's uncle was its Ministerial representative.

This gentleman, the brother of the deceased Captain Gorgon, lived at the paternal mansion of Gorgon Castle, and rejoiced in the name

and title of Sir George Grimsby Gorgon. He, too, like his younger brother, had married a lady beneath his own rank in life; having espoused the daughter and heiress of Mr. Hicks, the great brewer at Oldborough, who held numerous mortgages on the Gorgon property, all of which he yielded up, together with his daughter Juliana, to the care of the baronet.

What Lady Gorgon was in character, this history will show. In person, if she may be compared to any vulgar animal, one of her

father's heavy, healthy, broad-flanked, Roman-nosed white dray-horses might, to the poetic mind, appear to resemble her. At twenty she was a splendid creature, and though not at her full growth, yet remarkable for strength and sinew; at forty-five she was as fine a woman as any in his Majesty's dominions. Five feet seven in height, thirteen stone, her own teeth and hair, she looked as if she were the mother of a regiment of Grenadier Guards. She had three daughters of her own size, and at length, ten years after the birth of the last of

the young ladies, a son—one son—George Augustus Frederick Grimsby Gorgon, the godson of a royal duke, whose steady officer in waiting Sir George had been for many years.

It is needless to say, after entering so largely into a description of Lady Gorgon, that her husband was a little shrivelled, wizen-faced creature, eight inches shorter than her ladyship. This is the way of the world, as every single reader of this book must have remarked; for frolic love delights to join giants and pigmies of different sexes in the bonds of matrimony. When you saw her ladyship, in flame-coloured satin and gorgeous toque and feathers, entering the drawing-room, as footmen along the stairs shouted melodiously, "Sir George and Lady Gorgon," you beheld in her company a small withered old gentleman, with powder and large royal household buttons, who tripped at her elbow as a little weak-legged colt does at the side of a stout mare.

The little General had been present at about a hundred and twenty pitched battles on Hounslow Heath and Wormwood Scrubs, but had never drawn his sword against an enemy. As might be expected, therefore, his talk and *tenue* were outrageously military. He had the whole Army List by heart—that is, as far as the field-officers: all below them he scorned. A bugle at Gorgon Castle always sounded at breakfast and dinner: a gun announced sunset. He clung to his pigtail for many years after the army had forsaken that ornament, and could never be brought to think much of the Peninsular men for giving it up. When he spoke of the Duke, he used to call him "*My Lord Wellington—I recollect him as Captain Wellesley.*" He swore fearfully in conversation, was most regular at church, and regularly read to his family and domestics the morning and evening prayer; he bullied his daughters, *seemed* to bully his wife, who led him whither she chose; gave grand entertainments, and never asked a friend by chance; had splendid liveries, and starved his people; and was as dull, stingy, pompous, insolent, cringing, ill-tempered a little creature as ever was known.

With such qualities you may fancy that he was generally admired in society and by his country. So he was: and I never knew a man so endowed whose way through life was not safe—who had fewer pangs of conscience—more positive enjoyments—more respect shown to him—more favours granted to him, than such a one as my friend the General.

Her ladyship was just suited to him, and they did in reality admire each other hugely. Previously to her marriage with the baronet,

many love-passages had passed between her and William Pitt Scully, Esq., the attorney; and there was especially one story, *àpropos* of certain syllabubs and Sally-Lunn cakes, which seemed to show that matters had gone very far. Be this as it may, no sooner did the General (Major Gorgon he was then) cast an eye on her, than Scully's five years' fabric of love was instantly dashed to the ground. She cut him pitilessly, cut Sally Scully, his sister, her dearest friend and confidante, and bestowed her big person upon the little aide-de-camp at the end of a fortnight's wooing. In the course of time, their mutual fathers died; the Gorgon estates were unencumbered: patron of both the seats in the borough of Oldborough, and occupant of one, Sir George Grimsby Gorgon, Baronet, was a personage of no small importance.

He was, it scarcely need be said, a Tory; and this was the reason why William Pitt Scully, Esq., of the firm of Perkins and Scully, deserted those principles in which he had been bred and christened; deserted that church which he had frequented, for he could not bear to see Sir George and my lady flaunting in their grand pew;—deserted, I say, the church, adopted the conventicle, and became one of the most zealous and eloquent supporters that Freedom has known in our time. Scully, of the house of Scully and Perkins, was a dangerous enemy. In five years from that marriage, which snatched from the jilted solicitor his heart's young affections, Sir George Gorgon found that he must actually spend seven hundred pounds to keep his two seats. At the next election, a Liberal was set up against his man, and actually ran him hard; and finally, at the end of eighteen years, the rejected Scully—the mean attorney—was actually the *first* Member for Oldborough, Sir George Grimsby Gorgon, Baronet, being only the second!

The agony of that day cannot be imagined—the dreadful curses of Sir George, who saw fifteen hundred a year robbed from under his very nose—the religious resignation of my lady—the hideous window-smashing that took place at the "Gorgon Arms," and the discomfiture of the pelted Mayor and Corporation. The very next Sunday, Scully was reconciled to the church (or attended it in the morning, and the meeting twice in the afternoon), and as Doctor Snorter uttered the prayer for the High Court of Parliament, his eye—the eye of his whole party—turned towards Lady Gorgon and Sir George in a most unholy triumph. Sir George (who always stood during prayers, like a military man) fairly sank down among the hassocks, and Lady Gorgon was heard to sob as audibly as ever did little beadle-belaboured urchin.

Scully, when at Oldborough, came from that day forth to church. "What," said he, "was it to him? were we not all brethren?" Old Perkins, however, kept religiously to the Squaretoes congregation. In fact, to tell the truth, this subject had been debated between the partners, who saw the advantage of courting both the Establishment and the Dissenters—a manœuvre which, I need not say, is repeated in almost every country town in England, where a solicitor's house has this kind of power and connection.

Three months after this election came the races at Oldborough, and the race-ball. Gorgon was so infuriated by his defeat, that he gave "the Gorgon cup and cover," a matter of fifteen pounds. Scully, "although anxious," as he wrote from town, "anxious beyond measure to preserve the breed of horses for which our beloved country has ever been famous, could attend no such sports as these, which but too often degenerated into vice." It was voted a shabby excuse. Lady Gorgon was radiant in her barouche and four, and gladly became the patroness of the ball that was to ensue; and which all the gentry and townspeople, Tory and Whig, were in the custom of attending. The ball took place on the last day of the races. On that day, the walls of the market-house, the principal public buildings, and the "Gorgon Arms Hotel" itself, were plastered with the following—

"LETTER FROM OUR DISTINGUISHED REPRESENTATIVE, WILLIAM P. SCULLY, ESQ., ETC. ETC.

"*House of Commons, June* 1, 18—.

"MY DEAR HEELTAP,—You know my opinion about horse-racing, and though I blame neither you nor any brother Englishman who enjoys that manly sport, you will, I am sure, appreciate the conscientious motives which induce me not to appear among my friends and constituents on the festival of the 3rd, 4th, and 5th instant. If *I*, however, cannot allow my name to appear among your list of stewards, *one* at least of the representatives of Oldborough has no such scruples. Sir George Gorgon is among you: and though I differ from that honourable Baronet on more than *one vital point*, I am glad to think that he is with you. A gentleman, a soldier, a man of property in the county, how can he be better employed than in forwarding the county's amusements, and in forwarding the happiness of all?

"Had I no such scruples as those to which I have just alluded, I must still have refrained from coming among you. Your great Oldborough common-drainage and inclosure bill comes on to-morrow, and

I shall be *at my post.* I am sure, if Sir George Gorgon were here, he and I should on this occasion vote side by side, and that party strife would be forgotten in the object of our common interest—*our dear native town.*

"There is, however, another occasion at hand, in which I shall be proud to meet him. Your ball is on the night of the 6th. Party forgotten—brotherly union—innocent mirth—beauty, *our dear town's beauty*, our daughters in the joy of their expanding loveliness, our matrons in the exquisite contemplation of their children's bliss,—can you, can I, can Whig or Tory, can any Briton be indifferent to a scene like this, or refuse to join in this heart-stirring festival? If there *be* such let them pardon me,—I, for one, my dear Heeltap, will be among you on Friday night,—ay, and hereby invite all pretty Tory Misses, who are in want of a partner.

"I am here in the very midst of good things, you know, and we old folks like *a supper* after a dance. Please to accept a brace of bucks and a turtle, which come herewith. My worthy colleague, who was so liberal last year of his soup to the poor, will not, I trust, refuse to taste a little of Alderman Birch's—'tis offered on my part with hearty goodwill. Hey for the 6th, and *vive la joie!*

"Ever, my dear Heeltap, your faithful

"W. PITT SCULLY.

"P.S.—Of course this letter is *strictly private.* Say that the venison, &c. came from a *well-wisher to Oldborough.*"

This amazing letter was published, in defiance of Mr. Scully's injunctions, by the enthusiastic Heeltap, who said bluntly, in a preface, "that he saw no reason why Mr. Scully should be ashamed of his action, and he, for his part, was glad to let all friends at Oldborough know of it."

The allusion about the Gorgon soup was killing: thirteen paupers in Oldborough had, it was confidently asserted, died of it. Lady Gorgon, on the reading of this letter, was struck completely dumb; Sir George Gorgon was wild. Ten dozen of champagne was he obliged to send down to the "Gorgon Arms," to be added to the festival. He would have stayed away if he could, but he dared not.

At nine o'clock, he in general's uniform, his wife in blue satin and diamonds, his daughters in blue crape and white roses, his niece, Lucy Gorgon, in white muslin, his son George Augustus Frederick Grimsby

Gorgon, in a blue velvet jacket, sugar-loaf buttons, and nankeens, entered the north door of the ball-room, to much cheering, and the sound of "God save the King!"

At that very same moment, and from the south door, issued William Pitt Scully, Esq., M.P., and his staff. Mr. Scully had a bran-new blue coat and brass buttons, buff waistcoat, white kerseymere tights, pumps with large rosettes, and pink silk stockings.

"This wool," said he to a friend, "was grown on Oldborough sheep, this cloth was spun in Oldborough looms, these buttons were cast in an Oldborough manufactory, these shoes were made by an Oldborough tradesman, this *heart* first beat in Oldborough town, and pray heaven may be buried there!"

Could anything resist a man like this? John Perkins, who had come down as one of Scully's aides-de-camp, in a fit of generous enthusiasm, leaped on a whist-table, flung up a pocket-handkerchief, and shrieked—"SCULLY FOR EVER!"

Heeltap, who was generally drunk, fairly burst into tears, and the grave tradesmen and Whig gentry, who had dined with the Member at his inn, and accompanied him thence to the "Gorgon Arms," lifted their deep voices and shouted, "Hear!" "Good!" "Bravo!" "Noble!" "Scully for ever!" "God bless him!" and "Hurrah!"

The scene was tumultuously affecting; and when young Perkins sprang down from the table and came blushing up to the Member, that gentleman said, "Thank you, Jack! *thank* you, my boy! THANK you," in a way which made Perkins think that his supreme cup of bliss was quaffed; that he had but to die: for that life had no other such joy in store for him. Scully was Perkins's Napoleon—he yielded himself up to the attorney, body and soul.

Whilst this scene was going on under one chandelier of the ball-room, beneath the other scarlet little General Gorgon, sumptuous Lady Gorgon, the daughters and niece Gorgons, were standing surrounded by their Tory court, who affected to sneer and titter at the Whig demonstrations which were taking place.

"What a howwid thmell of whithkey!" lisped Cornet Fitch, of the Dragoons, to Miss Lucy, confidentially. "And thethe are what they call Whigth, are they? he! he!"

"They are drunk, —— me—drunk by——!" said the General to the Mayor.

"*Which* is Scully?" said Lady Gorgon, lifting her glass gravely (she was at tnat very moment thinking of the syllabubs). "Is it that tipsy man in the green coat, or that vulgar creature in the blue one?"

"Law, my lady," said the Mayoress, "have you forgotten him? Why, that's him in blue and buff."

"And a monthous fine man, too," said Cornet Fitch. "I wish we had him in our twoop—he'th thix feet thwee, if he'th an inch; ain't he, Genewal?"

No reply.

"And heavens! mamma," shrieked the three Gorgons in a breath, "see, one creature is on the whist-table. Oh, the wretch!"

"I'm sure he's very good-looking," said Lucy, simply.

Lady Gorgon darted at her an angry look, and was about to say something very contemptuous, when, at that instant, John Perkins's shout taking effect, Master George Augustus Frederick Grimsby Gorgon, not knowing better, incontinently raised a small shout on his side.

"Hear! good! bravo!" exclaimed he; "Scully for ever! Hurra-a-a-ay!" and fell skipping about like the Whigs opposite.

"Silence, you brute you!" groaned Lady Gorgon; and seizing him by the shirt-frill and coat-collar, carried him away to his nurse, who, with many other maids of the Whig and Tory parties, stood giggling and peeping at the landing-place.

Fancy how all these small incidents augmented the heap of Lady Gorgon's anger and injuries! She was a dull phlegmatic woman for the most part, and contented herself generally with merely despising her neighbours; but oh! what a fine active hatred raged in her bosom for victorious Scully! At this moment Mr. Perkins had finished shaking hands with his Napoleon—Napoleon seemed bent upon some tremendous enterprise. He was looking at Lady Gorgon very hard.

"She's a fine woman," said Scully, thoughtfully; he was still holding the hand of Perkins. And then, after a pause, "Gad! I think I'll try."

"Try what, sir?"

"She's a *deuced* fine woman!" burst out again the tender solicitor. "I *will* go. Springer, tell the fiddlers to strike up."

Springer scuttled across the room, and gave the leader of the band a knowing nod. Suddenly, "God save the King" ceased, and "Sir Roger de Coverley" began. The rival forces eyed each other; Mr. Scully, accompanied by his friend, came forward, looking very red, and fumbling two large kid gloves.

"*He's going to ask me to dance,*" hissed out Lady Gorgon, with a dreadful intuition, and she drew back behind her lord.

"D—— it, Madam, *then dance* with him!" said the General. "Don't you see that the scoundrel is carrying it all his own way! —— him! and —— him! and —— him!" (All of which dashes the reader may fill up with oaths of such strength as may be requisite.)

"General!" cried Lady Gorgon, but could say no more. Scully was before her.

"Madam!" exclaimed the Liberal Member for Oldborough, "in a moment like this—I say—that is—that on the present occasion—your ladyship—unaccustomed as I am—pooh, psha—*will* your ladyship give me the distinguished honour and pleasure of going down the country-dance with your ladyship?"

An immense heave of her ladyship's ample chest was perceptible. Yards of blond lace, which might be compared to a foam of the sea, were agitated at the same moment, and by the same mighty emotion. The river of diamonds which flowed round her ladyship's neck, seemed to swell and to shine more than ever. The tall plumes on her ambrosial head bowed down beneath the storm. In other words, Lady Gorgon, in a furious rage, which she was compelled to restrain, trembled, drew up, and bowing majestically said,—

"Sir, I shall have much pleasure." With this, she extended her hand. Scully, trembling, thrust forward one of his huge kid gloves, and led her to the head of the country-dance. John Perkins—who I presume had been drinking pretty freely, so as to have forgotten his ordinary bashfulness—looked at the three Gorgons in blue, then at the pretty smiling one in white, and stepping up to her, without the smallest hesitation, asked her if she would dance with him. The young lady smilingly agreed. The great example of Scully and Lady Gorgon was followed by all dancing men and women. Political enmities were forgotten. Whig voters invited Tory voters' wives to the dance. The daughters of Reform accepted the hands of the sons of Conservatism. The reconciliation of the Romans and Sabines was not more touching than this sweet fusion. Whack—whack! Mr. Springer clapped his hands; and the fiddlers adroitly obeying the cheerful signal, began playing "Sir Roger de Coverley" louder than ever.

I do not know by what extraordinary charm (*nescio quâ præter solitum, &c.*), but young Perkins, who all his life had hated country-dances, was delighted with this one, and skipped and laughed, poussetting, crossing, down-the-middling, with his merry little partner, till every one of the bettermost sort of the thirty-nine couples had

dropped panting away, and till the youngest Miss Gorgon, coming up to his partner, said, in a loud, hissing, scornful whisper, "Lucy, mamma thinks you have danced quite enough with this—this person." And Lucy, blushing, starting back, and looking at Perkins in a very melancholy way, made him a little curtsey, and went off to the Gorgonian party with her cousin. Perkins was too frightened to lead her back to her place—too frightened at first, and then too angry. "Person!" said he: his soul swelled with a desperate republicanism: he went back to his patron more of a radical than ever.

He found that gentleman in the solitary tea-room, pacing up and down before the observant landlady and handmaidens of the "Gorgon Arms," wiping his brows, gnawing his fingers—his ears looming over his stiff white shirt-collar as red as fire. Once more the great man seized John Perkins's hand as the latter came up.

"D—— the aristocrats!" roared the ex-follower of Squaretoes.

"And so say I; but what's the matter, sir?"

"What's the matter?—Why, that woman—that infernal haughty, strait-laced, cold-blooded brewer's daughter! I loved that woman, sir—I *kissed* that woman, sir, twenty years ago: we were all but engaged, sir: we've walked for hours and hours, sir—us and the governess—I've got a lock of her hair, sir, among my papers now; and to-night, would you believe it?—as soon as she got to the bottom of the set, away she went—not one word would she speak to me all the way down: and when I wanted to lead her to her place, and asked her if she would have a glass of negus, 'Sir,' says she, 'I have done my duty; I bear no malice: but I consider you a traitor to Sir George Gorgon's family—a traitor and an upstart! I consider your speaking to me as a piece of insolent vulgarity, and beg you will leave me to myself!' There's her speech, sir. Twenty people heard it, and all of her Tory set too. I'll tell you what, Jack: at the next election I'll put *you* up. Oh that woman! that woman!—and to think that I love her still!" Here Mr. Scully paused, and fiercely consoled himself by swallowing three cups of Mrs. Rincer's green tea.

The fact is, that Lady Gorgon's passion had completely got the better of her reason. Her ladyship was naturally cold and artificially extremely squeamish; and when this great red-faced enemy of hers looked tenderly at her through his red little eyes, and squeezed her hand and attempted to renew old acquaintance, she felt such an intolerable disgust at his triumph, at his familiarity, and at the remembrance of her own former liking for him, that she gave utterance

to the speech above correctly reported. The Tories were delighted with her spirit, and Cornet Fitch, with much glee, told the story to the General; but that officer, who was at whist with some of his friends, flung down his cards, and coming up to his lady, said briefly,

"Madam, you are a fool!"

"I will *not* stay here to be bearded by that disgusting man!—Mr. Fitch, call my people.—Henrietta, bring Miss Lucy from that linendraper with whom she is dancing. I will not stay, General, once for all."

Henrietta ran—she hated her cousin: Cornet Fitch was departing. "Stop, Fitch," said Sir George, seizing him by the arm. "You are a fool, Lady Gorgon," said he, "and I repeat it—a —— fool! This fellow Scully is carrying all before him: he has talked with everybody, laughed with everybody—and you, with your infernal airs—a brewer's daughter, by ——, must sit like a queen and not speak to a soul! You've lost me one seat of my borough, with your infernal pride—fifteen hundred a year, by Jove!—and you think you will bully me out of another. No, Madam, you *shall* stay, and stay supper too;—and the girls shall dance with every cursed chimney-sweep and butcher in the room: they shall —confound me!"

Her ladyship saw that it was necessary to submit; and Mr. Springer, the master of the ceremonies, was called, and requested to point out some eligible partners for the young ladies. One went off with a Whig auctioneer; another figured in a quadrille with a very Liberal apothecary, and the third, Miss Henrietta, remained.

"Hallo you, sir!" roared the little General to John Perkins, who was passing by. John turned round and faced him.

"You were dancing with my niece just now—show us your skill now, and dance with one of my daughters. Stand up, Miss Henrietta Gorgon—Mr. What's-your-name?"

"My name," said John, with marked and majestic emphasis, "is PERKINS." And he looked towards Lucy, who dared not look again.

"Miss Gorgon—Mr. Perkins. There now go and dance."

"Mr. Perkins regrets, Madam," said John, making a bow to Miss Henrietta, "that he is not able to dance this evening. I am this moment obliged to look to the supper; but you will find, no doubt, some other PERSON who will have much pleasure."

"Go to ——, sir!" screamed the General, starting up, and shaking his cane.

"Calm yourself, dearest George," said Lady Gorgon, clinging fondly to him. Fitch twiddled his moustaches. Miss Henrietta Gorgon

stared with open mouth. The silks of the surrounding dowagers rustled —the countenances of all looked grave.

"I will follow you, sir, wherever you please; and you may hear of me whenever you like," said Mr. Perkins, bowing and retiring. He heard little Lucy sobbing in a corner. He was lost at once—lost in love; he felt as if he could combat fifty generals! he never was so happy in his life.

The supper came; but as that meal cost five shillings a head, General Gorgon dismissed the four spinsters of his family homewards in the carriage, and so saved himself a pound. This added to Jack Perkins's wrath; he had hoped to have seen Miss Lucy once more. He was a steward, and, in the General's teeth, would have done his duty. He was thinking how he would have helped her to the most delicate chicken-wings and blancmanges, how he *would* have made her take champagne. Under the noses of indignant aunt and uncle, what glorious fun it would have been!

Out of place as Mr. Scully's present was, and though Lady Gorgon and her party sneered at the vulgar notion of venison and turtle for supper, all the world at Oldborough ate very greedily of those two substantial dishes; and the Mayor's wife became from that day forth a mortal enemy of the Gorgons: for, sitting near her ladyship, who refused the proffered soup and meat, the Mayoress thought herself obliged to follow this disagreeable example. She sent away the plate of turtle with a sigh, saying, however, to the baronet's lady, "I thought, Mem, that the *Lord Mayor of London* always had turtle to his supper?"

"And what if he didn't, Biddy?" said his Honour the Mayor; "a good thing's a good thing, and here goes!" wherewith he plunged his spoon into the savoury mess. The Mayoress, as we have said, dared not; but she hated Lady Gorgon, and remembered it at the next election.

The pride, in fact, and insolence of the Gorgon party rendered every person in the room hostile to them; so soon as, gorged with meat, they began to find that courage which Britons invariably derive from their victuals. The show of the Gorgon plate seemed to offend the people. The Gorgon champagne was a long time, too, in making its appearance. Arrive, however, it did. The people were waiting for it; the young ladies, not accustomed to that drink, declined pledging their admirers until it was produced; the men, too, despised the bucellas and sherry, and were looking continually towards the door. At last, Mr. Rincer, the landlord, Mr. Hock, Sir George's butler, and sundry others entered the room. Bang! went the corks—fizz the

foamy liquor sparkled into all sorts of glasses that were held out for its reception. Mr. Hock helped Sir George and his party, who drank with great gusto; the wine which was administered to the persons immediately around Mr. Scully was likewise pronounced to be good. But Mr. Perkins, who had taken his seat among the humbler individuals, and in the very middle of the table, observed that all these persons, after drinking, made to each other very wry and ominous faces, and whispered much. He tasted his wine: it was a villanous compound

of sugar, vitriol, soda-water, and green gooseberries. At this moment a great clatter of forks was made by the president's and vice-president's party. Silence for a toast—'twas silence all.

"Landlord," said Mr. Perkins, starting up (the rogue, where did his impudence come from?) "have you any champagne of *your own?*"

"Silence! down!" roared the Tories, the ladies looking aghast. "Silence, sit down you!" shrieked the well-known voice of the General.

"I beg your pardon, General," said young John Perkins; "but where *could* you have bought this champagne? My worthy friend I know is going to propose the ladies; let us at any rate drink such a toast in good wine." ("Hear, hear!") "Drink her ladyship's health in *this* stuff? I declare to goodness I would sooner drink it in beer!"

No pen can describe the uproar which arose: the anguish of the Gorgonites—the shrieks, jeers, cheers, ironic cries of "Swipes!" &c., which proceeded from the less genteel but more enthusiastic Scullyites.

"This vulgarity is too much," said Lady Gorgon, rising; and Mrs. Mayoress and the ladies of the party did so too.

The General, two squires, the clergyman, the Gorgon apothecary and attorney, with their respective ladies, followed her: they were plainly beaten from the field. Such of the Tories as dared remained, and in inglorious compromise shared the jovial Whig feast.

"Gentlemen and ladies," hiccupped Mr. Heeltap, "I'll give you a toast. 'Champagne to our real—hic—friends,' no, 'Real champagne to our friends,' and—hic—pooh! 'Champagne to our friends, and real pain to our enemies,'—huzzay!"

The Scully faction on this day bore the victory away, and if the polite reader has been shocked by certain vulgarities on the part of Mr. Scully and his friends, he must remember *imprimis* that Oldborough was an inconsiderable place—that the inhabitants thereof were chiefly tradespeople, not of refined habits—that Mr. Scully himself had only for three months mingled among the aristocracy—that his young friend Perkins was violently angry—and finally, and to conclude, that the proud vulgarity of the great Sir George Gorgon and his family was infinitely more odious and contemptible than the mean vulgarity of the Scullyites and their leader.

Immediately after this event, Mr. Scully and his young friend Perkins returned to town; the latter to his garrets in Bedford Row—the former to his apartments on the first-floor of the same house. He lived here to superintend his legal business: his London agents, Messrs. Higgs, Biggs & Blatherwick, occupying the ground-floor; the junior partner, Mr. Gustavus Blatherwick, the second flat of the house. Scully made no secret of his profession or residence: he was an attorney, and proud of it; he was the grandson of a labourer, and thanked God for it; he had made his fortune by his own honest labour, and why should he be ashamed of it?

And now, having explained at full length who the several heroes and heroines of this history were, and how they conducted themselves

in the country, let us describe their behaviour in London, and the great events which occurred there.

You must know that Mr. Perkins bore away the tenderest recollections of the young lady with whom he had danced at the Oldborough ball, and, having taken particular care to find out where she dwelt when in the metropolis, managed soon to become acquainted with aunt Biggs, and made himself so amiable to that lady, that she begged he would pass all his disengaged evenings at her lodgings in Caroline Place. Mrs. Biggs was perfectly aware that the young gentleman did not come for her bohea and muffins, so much as for the sweeter conversation of her niece, Miss Gorgon; but seeing that these two young people were of an age when ideas of love and marriage will spring up, do what you will; seeing that her niece had a fortune, and Mr. Perkins had the prospect of a place, and was moreover a very amiable and well-disposed young fellow, she thought her niece could not do better than marry him; and Miss Gorgon thought so too. Now the public will be able to understand the meaning of that important conversation which is recorded at the very commencement of this history.

Lady Gorgon and her family were likewise in town; but, when in the metropolis, they never took notice of their relative, Miss Lucy: the idea of acknowledging an ex-schoolmistress living in Mecklenburgh Square being much too preposterous for a person of my Lady Gorgon's breeding and fashion. She did not, therefore, know of the progress which sly Perkins was making all this while; for Lucy Gorgon did not think it was at all necessary to inform her ladyship how deeply she was smitten by the wicked young gentleman who had made all the disturbance at the Oldborough ball.

The intimacy of these young persons had, in fact, become so close, that on a certain sunshiny Sunday in December, after having accompanied aunt Biggs to church, they had pursued their walk as far as that rendezvous of lovers, the Regent's Park, and were talking of their coming marriage with much confidential tenderness, before the bears in the Zoological Gardens.

Miss Lucy was ever and anon feeding those interesting animals with buns, to perform which act of charity she had clambered up on the parapet which surrounds their den. Mr. Perkins was below; and Miss Lucy, having distributed her buns, was on the point of following, —but whether from timidity, or whether from a desire to do young Perkins an essential service, I know not: however, she found herself quite unwilling to jump down unaided.

"My dearest John," said she, "I never can jump that."

Whereupon, John stepped up, put one hand round Lucy's waist; and as one of hers gently fell upon his shoulder, Mr. Perkins took the other and said,—

"Now jump."

Hoop! jump she did, and so excessively active and clever was Mr. John Perkins, that he jumped Miss Lucy plump into the middle of a group formed of

Lady Gorgon,

The Misses Gorgon,

Master George Augustus Frederick Grimsby Gorgon,

And a footman, poodle, and French governess: who had all been for two or three minutes listening to the billings and cooings of these imprudent young lovers.

CHAPTER II.

SHOWS HOW THE PLOT BEGAN TO THICKEN IN OR ABOUT BEDFORD ROW.

ISS LUCY!"

"Upon my word!"

"I'm hanged if it arn't Lucy! How do, Lucy?" uttered Lady, the Misses, and Master Gorgon in a breath.

Lucy came forward, bending down her ambrosial curls, and blushing, as a modest young woman should: for, in truth, the scrape was very awkward. And as for John Perkins, he made a start, and then a step forwards, and then two backwards, and then began laying hands upon his black satin stock—in short, the sun did not shine at that moment upon a man who looked so exquisitely foolish.

"Miss Lucy Gorgon, is your aunt—is Mrs. Briggs here?" said Lady Gorgon, drawing herself up with much state.

"Mrs. Biggs, aunt?" said Lucy demurely.

"Biggs or Briggs, madam, it is not of the slightest consequence. I presume that persons in my rank of life are not expected to know everybody's name in Magdeburg Square?" (Lady Gorgon had a house in Baker Street, and a dismal house it was.) "*Not* here," continued she, rightly interpreting Lucy's silence, "NOT here?—and may I ask how long is it that young ladies have been allowed to walk abroad without chaperons, and to—to take a part in such scenes as that which we have just seen acted?"

To this question—and indeed it was rather difficult to answer—

Miss Gorgon had no reply. There were the six grey eyes of her cousins glowering at her; there was George Augustus Frederick examining her with an air of extreme wonder, Mademoiselle the governess turning her looks demurely away, and awful Lady Gorgon glancing fiercely at her in front. Not mentioning the footman and poodle, what could a poor modest, timid girl plead before such an inquisition, especially when she was clearly guilty? Add to this, that as Lady Gorgon, that majestic woman, always remarkable for her size and insolence of demeanour, had planted herself in the middle of the path, and spoke at the extreme pitch of her voice, many persons walking in the neighbourhood had heard her ladyship's speech and stopped, and seemed disposed to await the rejoinder.

"For heaven's sake, aunt, don't draw a crowd around us," said Lucy, who, indeed, was glad of the only escape that lay in her power. "I will tell you of the—of the circumstances of—of my engagement with this gentleman—with Mr. Perkins," added she, in a softer tone —so soft that the *'erkins* was quite inaudible.

"A Mr. What? An engagement without consulting your guardians!" screamed her ladyship. "This must be looked to! Jerningham, call round my carriage. Mademoiselle, you will have the goodness to walk home with Master Gorgon, and carry him, if you please, where there is wet; and, girls, as the day is fine, you will do likewise. Jerningham, you will attend the young ladies. Miss Gorgon, I will thank you to follow me immediately." And so saying, and looking at the crowd with ineffable scorn, and at Mr. Perkins not at all, the lady bustled away forwards, the files of Gorgon daughters and governess closing round and enveloping poor Lucy, who found herself carried forward against her will, and in a minute seated in her aunt's coach, along with that tremendous person.

Her case was bad enough, but what was it to Perkins's? Fancy his blank surprise and rage at having his love thus suddenly ravished from him, and his delicious *tête-à-tête* interrupted. He managed, in an inconceivably short space of time, to conjure up half a million obstacles to his union. What should he do? he would rush on to Baker Street, and wait there until his Lucy left Lady Gorgon's house.

He could find no vehicle in the Regent's Park, and was in consequence obliged to make his journey on foot. Of course, he nearly killed himself with running, and ran so quick, that he was just in time to see the two ladies step out of Lady Gorgon's carriage at her own house, and to hear Jerningham's fellow-footman roar to the Gorgonian coachman, "Half-past seven!" at which hour we are, to

this day, convinced that Lady Gorgon was going out to dine. Mr. Jerningham's associate having banged to the door, with an insolent look towards Perkins, who was prying in with the most suspicious and indecent curiosity, retired, exclaiming, "That chap has a hi to our great-coats, I reckon!" and left John Perkins to pace the street and be miserable.

John Perkins then walked resolutely up and down dismal Baker Street, determined on an *éclaircissement*. He was for some time occupied in thinking how it was that the Gorgons were not at church, they who made such a parade of piety; and John Perkins smiled as he passed the chapel, and saw that two *charity sermons* were to be preached that day—and therefore it was that General Gorgon read prayers to his family at home in the morning.

Perkins, at last, saw that little General, in blue frock-coat and spotless buff gloves, saunter scowling home; and half-an-hour before his arrival, had witnessed the entrance of Jerningham, and the three gaunt Miss Gorgons, poodle, son-and-heir, and French governess, protected by him, into Sir George's mansion.

"Can she be going to stay all night?" mused poor John, after being on the watch for three hours: "that footman is the only person who has left the house:" when presently, to his inexpressible delight, he saw a very dirty hackney-coach clatter up to the Gorgon door, out of which first issued the ruby plush breeches and stalwart calves of Mr. Jerningham; these were followed by his body, and then the gentleman, ringing modestly, was admitted.

Again the door opened: a lady came out, nor was she followed by the footman, who crossed his legs at the door-post and allowed her to mount the jingling vehicle as best she might. Mr. Jerningham had witnessed the scene in the Park Gardens, had listened to the altercation through the library keyhole, and had been mighty sulky at being ordered to call a coach for this young woman. He did not therefore deign to assist her to mount.

But there was *one* who did! Perkins was by the side of his Lucy: he had seen her start back and cry, "La, John!"—had felt her squeeze his arm—had mounted with her into the coach, and then shouted with a voice of thunder to the coachman, "Caroline Place, Mecklenburgh Square."

But Mr. Jerningham would have been much more surprised and puzzled if he had waited one minute longer, and seen this Mr. Perkins, who had so gallantly escaladed the hackney-coach, step out of it with the most mortified, miserable, chap-fallen countenance possible.

The fact is, he had found poor Lucy sobbing fit to break her heart, and instead of consoling her, as he expected, he only seemed to irritate her further: for she said, "Mr. Perkins—I beg—I insist, that you leave the carriage." And when Perkins made some movement (which, not being in the vehicle at the time, we have never been able to comprehend), she suddenly sprang from the back-seat and began pulling at a large piece of cord which communicated with the wrist of the gentleman driving; and, screaming to him at the top of her voice, bade him immediately stop.

This Mr. Coachman did, with a curious, puzzled, grinning air.

Perkins descended, and on being asked, "Vere ham I to drive the young 'oman, sir?" I am sorry to say muttered something like an oath, and uttered the above-mentioned words, "Caroline Place, Mecklenburgh Square," in a tone which I should be inclined to describe as both dogged and sheepish,—very different from that cheery voice which he had used when he first gave the order.

Poor Lucy, in the course of those fatal three hours which had passed while Mr. Perkins was pacing up and down Baker Street, had received a lecture which lasted exactly one hundred and eighty minutes —from her aunt first, then from her uncle, whom we have seen marching homewards, and often from both together.

Sir George Gorgon and his lady poured out such a flood of advice and abuse against the poor girl, that she came away from the interview quite timid and cowering; and when she saw John Perkins (the sly rogue! how well he thought he had managed the trick!) she shrunk from him as if he had been a demon of wickedness, ordered him out of the carriage, and went home by herself, convinced that she had committed some tremendous sin.

While, then, her coach jingled away to Caroline Place, Perkins, once more alone, bent his steps in the same direction. A desperate, heart-stricken man, he passed by the beloved's door, saw lights in the front drawing-room, felt probably that she was there; but he could not go in. Moodily he paced down Doughty Street, and turning abruptly into Bedford Row, rushed into his own chambers, where Mrs. Snooks, the laundress, had prepared his humble Sabbath meal.

A cheerful fire blazed in his garret, and Mrs. Snooks had prepared for him the favourite blade-bone he loved (blest four-days' dinner for a bachelor—roast, cold, hashed, grilled blade-bone, the fourth being better than the first); but although he usually did rejoice in this meal —ordinarily, indeed, grumbling that there was not enough to satisfy

him—he, on this occasion, after two mouthfuls, flung down his knife and fork, and buried his two claws in his hair.

"Snooks," said he at last, very moodily, "remove this d—— mutton, give me my writing things, and some hot brandy-and-water."

This was done without much alarm: for you must know that Perkins used to dabble in poetry, and ordinarily prepared himself for composition by this kind of stimulus.

He wrote hastily a few lines.

"Snooks, put on your bonnet," said he, "and carry this—*you know where!*" he added, in a hollow, heart-breaking tone of voice, that affected poor Snooks almost to tears. She went, however, with the note, which was to this purpose:—

"Lucy! Lucy! my soul's love—what, what has happened? I am writing this"—(*a gulp of brandy-and-water*)—"in a state bordering on distraction—madness—insanity" (*another*). "Why did you send me out of the coach in that cruel, cruel way? Write to me a word, a line—tell me, tell me, I may come to you—and leave me not in this agonizing condition; your faithful" (*glog—glog—glog—the whole glass*)—— "J. P."

He never signed John Perkins in full—he couldn't, it was so unromantic.

Well, this missive was despatched by Mrs. Snooks, and Perkins in a fearful state of excitement, haggard, wild, and with more brandy-and-water, awaited the return of his messenger.

When at length, after about an absence of forty years, as it seemed to him, the old lady returned with a large packet, Perkins seized it with a trembling hand, and was yet more frightened to see the hand-writing of Mrs. or Miss Biggs.

"MY DEAR MR. PERKINS," she began—"Although I am not your soul's adored, I performed her part for once, since I have read your letter, as I told her. You need not be very much alarmed, although Lucy is at this moment in bed and unwell: for the poor girl has had a sad scene at her grand uncle's house in Baker Street, and came home very much affected. Rest, however, will restore her, for she is not one of your nervous sort; and I hope when you come in the morning, you will see her as blooming as she was when you went out to-day on that unlucky walk.

"See what Sir George Gorgon says of us all! You won't challenge

him, I know, as he is to be your uncle, and so I may show you his letter.

"Good-night, my dear John. Do not go *quite* distracted before morning; and believe me your loving aunt,

"JEMIMA BIGGS."

"*Baker Street, 11th December.*

"Major-General Sir George Gorgon has heard with the utmost disgust and surprise of the engagement which Miss Lucy Gorgon has thought fit to form.

"The Major-General cannot conceal his indignation at the share which Miss Biggs has taken in this disgraceful transaction.

"Sir George Gorgon puts an absolute veto upon all further communication between his niece and the low-born adventurer who has been admitted into her society, and begs to say that Lieutenant Fitch, of the Lifeguards, is the gentleman who he intends shall marry Miss Gorgon.

"It is the Major-General's wish, that on the 28th Miss Gorgon should be ready to come to his house, in Baker Street, where she will be more safe from impertinent intrusions than she has been in Mucklebury Square.

"Mrs. Biggs,
"Caroline Place,
"Mecklenburgh Square."

When poor John Perkins read this epistle, blank rage and wonder filled his soul, at the audacity of the little General, who thus, without the smallest title in the world, pretended to dispose of the hand and fortune of his niece. The fact is, that Sir George had such a transcendent notion of his own dignity and station, that it never for a moment entered his head that his niece, or anybody else connected with him, should take a single step in life without previously receiving his orders; and Mr. Fitch, a baronet's son, having expressed an admiration of Lucy, Sir George had determined that his suit should be accepted, and really considered Lucy's preference of another as downright treason.

John Perkins determined on the death of Fitch as the very least reparation that should satisfy him; and vowed too that some of the General's blood should be shed for the words which he had dared to utter.

We have said that William Pitt Scully, Esq., M.P., occupied the

first-floor of Mr. Perkins's house, in Bedford Row; and the reader is further to be informed that an immense friendship had sprung up between these two gentlemen. The fact is, that poor John was very much flattered by Scully's notice, and began in a very short time to fancy himself a political personage; for he had made several of Scully's speeches, written more than one letter from him to his constituents, and, in a word, acted as his gratis clerk. At least a guinea a week did Mr. Perkins save to the pockets of Mr. Scully, and with hearty good will too, for he adored the great William Pitt, and believed every word that dropped from the pompous lips of that gentleman.

Well, after having discussed Sir George Gorgon's letter, poor Perkins, in the utmost fury of mind that his darling should be slandered so, feeling a desire for fresh air, determined to descend to the garden and smoke a cigar in that rural, quiet spot. The night was very calm. The moonbeams slept softly upon the herbage of Gray's Inn gardens, and bathed with silver splendour Theobald's Row. A million of little frisky twinkling stars attended their queen, who looked with bland round face upon their gambols, as they peeped in and out from the azure heavens. Along Gray's Inn wall a lazy row of cabs stood listlessly, for who would call a cab on such a night? Meanwhile their drivers, at the alehouse near, smoked the short pipe or quaffed the foaming beer. Perhaps from Gray's Inn Lane some broken sounds of Irish revelry might rise. Issuing perhaps from Raymond Buildings gate, six lawyers' clerks might whoop a tipsy song—or the loud watchman yell the passing hour; but beyond this all was silence; and young Perkins, as he sat in the summer-house at the bottom of the garden, and contemplated the peaceful heaven, felt some influences of it entering into his soul, and almost forgetting revenge, thought but of peace and love.

Presently, he was aware there was some one else pacing the garden. Who could it be?—Not Blatherwick, for he passed the Sabbath with his grandmamma at Clapham; not Scully surely, for he always went to Bethesda Chapel, and to a select prayer-meeting afterwards. Alas! it *was* Scully: for though that gentleman *said* that he went to chapel, we have it for a fact that he did not always keep his promise, and was at this moment employed in rehearsing an extempore speech, which he proposed to deliver at St. Stephen's.

"Had I, sir," spouted he, with folded arms, slowly pacing to and fro—"Had I, sir, entertained the smallest possible intention of addressing the House on the present occasion—hum, on the present occasion—I would have endeavoured to prepare myself in a way that

should have at least shown my sense of the greatness of the subject before the House's consideration, and the nature of the distinguished audience I have the honour to address. I am, sir, a plain man—born of the people—myself one of the people, having won, thank heaven, an honourable fortune and position by my own honest labour; and standing here as I do—

* * * * *

Here Mr. Scully (it may be said that he never made a speech without bragging about himself: and an excellent plan it is, for people cannot help believing you at last)—here, I say, Mr. Scully, who had one arm raised, felt himself suddenly tipped on the shoulder, and heard a voice saying, "Your money or your life!"

The honourable gentleman twirled round as if he had been shot; the papers on which a great part of this impromptu was written dropped from his lifted hand, and some of them were actually borne on the air into neighbouring gardens. The man was, in fact, in the direst fright.

"It's only I," said Perkins, with rather a forced laugh, when he saw the effect that his wit had produced.

"Only you! And pray what the dev——what right have you to—to come upon a man of my rank in that way, and disturb me in the midst of very important meditations?" asked Mr. Scully, beginning to grow fierce.

"I want your advice," said Perkins, "on a matter of the very greatest importance to me. You know my idea of marrying?"

"Marry!" said Scully; "I thought you had given up that silly scheme. And how, pray, do you intend to live?"

"Why, my intended has a couple of hundreds a year, and my clerkship in the Tape and Sealing-Wax Office will be as much more."

"Clerkship—Tape and Sealing-Wax Office—Government sinecure!—Why, good heavens! John Perkins, you don't tell *me* that you are going to accept any such thing?"

"It *is* a very small salary, certainly," said John, who had a decent notion of his own merits; "but consider, six months' vacation, two hours in the day, and those spent over the newspapers. After all, it's——"

"After all it's a swindle," roared out Mr. Scully—"a swindle upon the country; an infamous tax upon the people, who starve that you may fatten in idleness. But take this clerkship in the Tape and Sealing-Wax Office," continued the patriot, his bosom heaving with noble indignation, and his eye flashing the purest fire,—"*Take* this

clerkship, John Perkins, and sanction tyranny, by becoming one of its agents; sanction dishonesty by sharing in its plunder—do this, BUT never more be friend of mine. Had I a child," said the patriot, clasping his hands and raising his eyes to heaven, "I would rather see him dead, sir—dead, dead at my feet, than the servant of a Government which all honest men despise." And here, giving a searching glance at Perkins, Mr. Scully began tramping up and down the garden in a perfect fury.

"Good heavens!" exclaimed the timid John Perkins—"don't say *so*. My dear Mr. Scully, I'm not the dishonest character you suppose me to be—I never looked at the matter in this light. I'll—I'll consider of it. I'll tell Crampton that I will give up the place; but for heaven's sake, don't let me forfeit *your* friendship, which is dearer to me than any place in the world."

Mr. Scully pressed his hand, and said nothing; and though their interview lasted a full half hour longer, during which they paced up and down the gravel walk, we shall not breathe a single syllable of their conversation, as it has nothing to do with our tale.

The next morning, after an interview with Miss Lucy, John Perkins, Esq., was seen to issue from Mrs. Biggs' house, looking particularly pale, melancholy, and thoughtful; and he did not stop until he reached a certain door in Downing Street, where was the office of a certain great Minister, and the offices of the clerks in his lordship's department.

The head of them was Mr. Josiah Crampton, who has now to be introduced to the public. He was a little old gentleman, some sixty years of age, maternal uncle to John Perkins; a bachelor, who had been about forty-two years employed in the department of which he was now the head.

After waiting four hours in an ante-room, where a number of Irishmen, some newspaper editors, many pompous-looking political personages asking for the "first lord," a few sauntering clerks, and numbers of swift active messengers passed to and fro;—after waiting for four hours, making drawings on the blotting-book, and reading the *Morning Post* for that day week, Mr. Perkins was informed that he might go into his uncle's room, and did so accordingly.

He found a little hard old gentleman seated at a table covered with every variety of sealing-wax, blotting-paper, envelopes, despatch-boxes, green tapers, &c. &c. An immense fire was blazing in the grate, an immense sheet-almanack hung over that, a screen, three or

four chairs, and a faded Turkey carpet, formed the rest of the furniture of this remarkable room—which I have described thus particularly, because, in the course of a long official life, I have remarked that such is the invariable decoration of political rooms.

"Well, John," said the little hard old gentleman, pointing to an arm-chair, "I'm told you've been here since eleven. Why the deuce do you come so early?"

"I had important business," answered Mr. Perkins, stoutly; and

as his uncle looked up with a comical expression of wonder, John began in a solemn tone to deliver a little speech which he had composed, and which proved him to be a very worthy, easy, silly fellow.

"Sir," said Mr. Perkins, "you have known for some time past the nature of my political opinions, and the intimacy which I have had the honour to form with one—with some of the leading members of the Liberal party." (A grin from Mr. Crampton.) "When first, by

your kindness, I was promised the clerkship in the Tape and Sealing-Wax Office, my opinions were not formed as they are now; and having taken the advice of the gentlemen with whom I act,"—(an enormous grin,)—"the advice, I say, of the gentlemen with whom I act, and the counsel likewise of my own conscience, I am compelled, with the deepest grief, to say, my dear uncle, that I—I——"

"That you—what, sir?" exclaimed little Mr. Crampton, bouncing off his chair. "You don't mean to say that you are such a fool as to decline the place?"

"I do decline the place," said Perkins, whose blood rose at the word "fool." "As a man of honour, I cannot take it."

"Not take it! and how are you to live? On the rent of that house of yours? For, by gad, sir, if you give up the clerkship, I never will give you a shilling."

"It cannot be helped," said Mr. Perkins, looking as much like a martyr as he possibly could, and thinking himself a very fine fellow. "I have talents, sir, which I hope to cultivate; and am member of a profession by which a man may hope to rise to the very highest offices of the State."

"Profession, talents, offices of the State! Are you mad, John Perkins, that you come to me with such insufferable twaddle as this? Why, do you think if you *had* been capable of rising at the bar, I would have taken so much trouble about getting you a place? No, sir; you are too fond of pleasure, and bed, and tea-parties, and small-talk, and reading novels, and playing the flute, and writing sonnets. You would no more rise at the bar than my messenger, sir. It was because I knew your disposition—that hopeless, careless, irresolute good-humour of yours—that I had determined to keep you out of danger, by placing you in a snug shelter, where the storms of the world would not come near you. You must have principles forsooth! and you must marry Miss Gorgon, of course; and by the time you have gone ten circuits, and had six children, you will have eaten up every shilling of your wife's fortune, and be as briefless as you are now. Who the deuce has put all this nonsense into your head? I think I know."

Mr. Perkins's ears tingled as these hard words saluted them; and he scarcely knew whether he ought to knock his uncle down, or fall at his feet and say, "Uncle, I have been a fool, and I know it." The fact is, that in his interview with Miss Gorgon and her aunt in the morning, when he came to tell them of the resolution he had formed to give up the place, both the ladies and John himself had agreed,

with a thousand rapturous tears and exclamations, that he was one of the noblest young men that ever lived, had acted as became himself, and might with perfect propriety give up the place, his talents being so prodigious that no power on earth could hinder him from being Lord Chancellor. Indeed, John and Lucy had always thought the clerkship quite beneath him, and were not a little glad, perhaps, at finding a pretext for decently refusing it. But as Perkins was a young gentleman whose candour was such that he was always swayed by the opinions of the last speaker, he did begin to feel now the truth of his uncle's statements, however disagreeable they might be.

Mr. Crampton continued :—

"I think I know the cause of your patriotism. Has not William Pitt Scully, Esq., had something to do with it?"

Mr. Perkins *could* not turn any redder than he was, but confessed with deep humiliation that "he *had* consulted Mr. Scully among other friends."

Mr. Crampton smiled—drew a letter from a heap before him, and tearing off the signature, handed over the document to his nephew. It contained the following paragraphs :—

"Hawksby has sounded Scully : we can have him any day we want him. He talks very big at present, and says he would not take anything under a . . . This is absurd. He has a Yorkshire nephew coming up to town, and wants a place for him. There is one vacant in the Tape Office, he says : have you not a promise of it?"

"I can't—I can't believe it," said John ; "this, sir, is some weak invention of the enemy. Scully is the most honourable man breathing."

"Mr. Scully is a gentleman in a very fair way to make a fortune," answered Mr. Crampton. "Look you, John—it is just as well for your sake that I should give you the news a few weeks before the papers, for I don't want you to be ruined, if I can help it, as I don't wish to have you on my hands. We know all the particulars of Scully's history. He was a Tory attorney at Oldborough ; he was jilted by the present Lady Gorgon, turned Radical, and fought Sir George in his own borough. Sir George would have had the peerage he is dying for, had he not lost that second seat (by-the-by, my lady will be here in five minutes), and Scully is now quite firm there. Well, my dear lad, we have bought your incorruptible Scully. Look here," —and Mr. Crampton produced three *Morning Posts*.

"'THE HONOURABLE HENRY HAWKSBY'S DINNER-PARTY.—Lord So-and-So—Duke of So-and-so—W. Pitt Scully, Esq, M.P.'

"Hawksby is our neutral, our dinner-giver.

"'LADY DIANA DOLDRUM'S ROUT.—W. Pitt Scully, Esq.," again.

"'THE EARL OF MANTRAP'S GRAND DINNER.'—A Duke—four Lords—' Mr. Scully, and *Sir George Gorgon.*'"

"Well, but I don't see how you have bought him; look at his votes."

"My dear John," said Mr. Crampton, jingling his watch-seals very complacently, "I am letting you into fearful secrets. The great common end of party is to buy your opponents—the great statesman buys them for nothing."

Here the attendant genius of Mr. Crampton made his appearance, and whispered something, to which the little gentleman said, "Show her ladyship in,"—when the attendant disappeared.

"John," said Mr. Crampton, with a very queer smile, "you can't stay in this room while Lady Gorgon is with me; but there is a little clerk's room behind the screen there, where you can wait until I call you."

John retired, and as he closed the door of communication, strange to say, little Mr. Crampton sprang up and said, "Confound the young ninny, he has shut the door!"

Mr. Crampton then, remembering that he wanted a map in the next room, sprang into it, left the door half open in coming out, and was in time to receive her ladyship with smiling face as she, ushered by Mr. Strongitharm, majestically sailed in.

CHAPTER III.

BEHIND THE SCENES.

N issuing from and leaving open the door of the inner room, Mr. Crampton had bestowed upon Mr. Perkins a look so peculiarly arch, that even he, simple as he was, began to imagine that some mystery was about to be cleared up, or some mighty matter to be discussed. Presently he heard the well-known voice of Lady Gorgon in conversation with his uncle. What could their talk be about? Mr. Perkins was dying to know, and, shall we say it? advanced to the door on tiptoe and listened with all his might.

Her ladyship, that Juno of a woman, if she had not borrowed Venus's girdle to render herself irresistible, at least had adopted a tender, coaxing, wheedling, frisky tone, quite different from her ordinary dignified style of conversation. She called Mr. Crampton a naughty man, for neglecting his old friends, vowed that Sir George was quite hurt at his not coming to dine—nor fixing a day when he would come—and added, with a most engaging ogle, that she had three fine girls at home, who would perhaps make an evening pass pleasantly, even to such a gay bachelor as Mr. Crampton.

"Madam," said he, with much gravity, "the daughters of such a mother must be charming; but I, who have seen your ladyship, am, alas! proof against even them."

Both parties here heaved tremendous sighs and affected to be wonderfully unhappy about something.

"I wish," after a pause, said Lady Gorgon—"I wish, dear Mr. Crampton, you would not use that odious title 'my ladyship;' you know it always makes me melancholy."

"Melancholy, my dear Lady Gorgon, and why?"

"Because it makes me think of another title that ought to have been mine—ours (I speak for dear Sir George's and my darling boy's sake, heaven knows, not mine). What a sad disappointment it has been to my husband, that after all his services, all the promises he has had, they have never given him his peerage. As for me, you know——"

"For you, my dear madam, I know quite well that you care for no such bauble as a coronet, except in so far as it may confer honour upon those most dear to you—excellent wife and noble mother as you are. Heigho! what a happy man is Sir George!"

Here there was another pause, and if Mr. Perkins could have seen what was taking place behind the screen, he would have beheld little Mr. Crampton looking into Lady Gorgon's face, with as love-sick a Romeo-gaze as he could possibly counterfeit; while her ladyship, blushing somewhat and turning her own grey gogglers up to heaven, received all his words for gospel, and sat fancying herself to be the best, most meritorious, and most beautiful creature in the three kingdoms.

"You men are terrible flatterers," continued she; "but you say right: for myself I value not these empty distinctions. I am growing old, Mr. Crampton,—yes, indeed, I am, although you smile so incredulously,—and let me add, that *my* thoughts are fixed upon *higher* things than earthly crowns. But tell me, you who are all in all with Lord Bagwig, are we never to have our peerage? His Majesty, I know, is not averse; the services of dear Sir George to a member of his Majesty's august family, I know, have been appreciated in the highest quarter. Ever since the peace we have had a promise. Four hundred pounds has Sir George spent at the Herald's Office, (I myself am of one of the most ancient families in the kingdom, Mr. Crampton,) and the poor dear man's health is really ruined by the anxious, sickening feeling of hope so long delayed."

Mr. Crampton now assumed an air of much solemnity.

"My dear Lady Gorgon," said he, "will you let me be frank with you, and will you promise solemnly that what I am going to tell you shall never be repeated to a single soul?"

Lady Gorgon promised.

"Well, then, since the truth you must know, you yourselves have

been in part the cause of the delay of which you complain. You gave us two votes five years ago, you now only give us one. If Sir George were to go up to the Peers, we should lose even that one vote; and would it be common sense in us to incur such a loss? Mr. Scully, the Liberal, would return another Member of his own way of thinking; and as for the Lords, we have, you know, a majority there."

"Oh, that horrid man!" said Lady Gorgon, cursing Mr. Scully in her heart, and beginning to play a rapid tattoo with her feet, "that miscreant, that traitor, that—that attorney has been our ruin."

"Horrid man if you please, but give me leave to tell you that the horrid man is not the sole cause of your ruin—if ruin you will call it. I am sorry to say that I do candidly think Ministers believe that Sir George Gorgon has lost his influence in Oldborough as much through his own fault as through Mr. Scully's cleverness."

"Our own fault! Good heavens! Have we not done everything —everything that persons of our station in the county could do, to keep those misguided men? Have we not remonstrated, threatened, taken away our custom from the Mayor, established a Conservative apothecary—in fact done all that gentlemen could do? But these are such times, Mr. Crampton: the spirit of revolution is abroad, and the great families of England are menaced by democratic insolence."

This was Sir George Gorgon's speech always after dinner, and was delivered by his lady with a great deal of stateliness. Somewhat, perhaps, to her annoyance, Mr. Crampton only smiled, shook his head, and said—

"Nonsense, my dear Lady Gorgon—pardon the phrase, but I am a plain old man, and call things by their names. Now, will you let me whisper in your ear one word of truth? You have tried all sorts of remonstrances, and exerted yourself to maintain your influence in every way, except the right one, and that is——".

"What, in heaven's name?"

"Conciliation. We know your situation in the borough. Mr. Scully's whole history, and, pardon me for saying so (but we men in office know everything), yours——"

Lady Gorgon's ears and cheeks now assumed the hottest hue of crimson. She thought of her former passages with Scully, and of the days when—but never mind when: for she suffered her veil to fall, and buried her head in the folds of her handkerchief. Vain folds! The wily little Mr. Crampton could see all that passed behind the cambric, and continued—

"Yes, madam, we know the absurd hopes that were formed by a

certain attorney twenty years since. We know how, up to this moment, he boasts of certain walks——"

"With the governess—we were always with the governess!" shrieked out Lady Gorgon, clasping her hands. "She was not the wisest of women."

"With the governess of course," said Mr. Crampton, firmly. "Do you suppose that any man dare breathe a syllable against your spotless reputation? Never, my dear madam; but what I would urge is this—you have treated your disappointed admirer too cruelly."

"What! the traitor who has robbed us of our rights?"

"He never would have robbed you of your rights if you had been more kind to him. You should be gentle, madam; you should forgive him—you should be friends with him."

"With a traitor, never!"

"Think what made him a traitor, Lady Gorgon; look in your glass, and say if there be not some excuse for him? Think of the feelings of the man who saw beauty such as yours—I am a plain man and must speak—virtue such as yours, in the possession of a rival. By heavens, madam, I think he was *right* to hate Sir George Gorgon! Would you have him allow such a prize to be ravished from him without a pang on his part?"

"He was, I believe, very much attached to me," said Lady Gorgon, quite delighted; "but you must be aware that a young man of his station in life could not look up to a person of my rank."

"Surely not: it was monstrous pride and arrogance in Mr. Scully. But *que voulez-vous?* Such is the world's way. Scully could not help loving you—who that knows you can? I am a plain man, and say what I think. He loves you still. Why make an enemy of him, who would at a word be at your feet? Dearest Lady Gorgon, listen to me. Sir George Gorgon and Mr. Scully have already met—their meeting was our contrivance. It is for our interest, for yours, that they should be friends. If there were two Ministerial Members for Oldborough, do you think your husband's peerage would be less secure? I am not at liberty to tell you all I know on this subject; but do, I entreat you, be reconciled to him."

And after a little more conversation, which was carried on by Mr. Crampton in the same tender way, this important interview closed, and Lady Gorgon, folding her shawl round her, threaded certain mysterious passages and found her way to her carriage in Whitehall.

"I hope you have not been listening, you rogue?" said Mr. Crampton to his nephew who blushed most absurdly by way of

answer. "You would have heard great State secrets, if you had dared to do so. That woman is perpetually here, and if peerages are to be had for the asking, she ought to have been a duchess by this time. I would not have admitted her but for a reason that I have. Go you now and ponder upon what you have heard and seen. Be on good terms with Scully, and, above all, speak not a word concerning our interview—no, not a word even to your mistress. By the way, I presume, sir, you will recall your resignation?"

The bewildered Perkins was about to stammer out a speech, when his uncle, cutting it short, pushed him gently out of the door.

* * * * *

At the period when the important events occurred which have been recorded here, parties ran very high, and a mighty struggle for the vacant Speakership was about to come on. The Right Honourable Robert Pincher was the Ministerial candidate, and Sir Charles Macabaw was patronized by the Opposition. The two Members for Oldborough of course took different sides, the baronet being of the Pincher faction, while Mr. William Pitt Scully strongly supported the Macabaw party.

It was Mr. Scully's intention to deliver an impromptu speech upon the occasion of the election, and he and his faithful Perkins prepared it between them: for the latter gentleman had wisely kept his uncle's counsel and his own, and Mr. Scully was quite ignorant of the conspiracy that was brooding. Indeed so artfully had that young Machiavel of a Perkins conducted himself, that when asked by his patron whether he had given up his place in the Tape and Sealing-Wax Office, he replied that "he *had* tendered his resignation," but did not say one word about having recalled it.

"You were right, my boy, quite right," said Mr. Scully. "A man of uncompromising principles should make no compromise." And herewith he sat down and wrote off a couple of letters, one to Mr. Hawksby, telling him that the place in the Sealing-Wax Office was, as he had reason to know, vacant; and the other to his nephew, stating that it was to be his. "Under the rose, my dear Bob," added Mr. Scully, "it will cost you five hundred pounds; but you cannot invest your money better."

It is needless to state that the affair was to be conducted "with the strictest secrecy and honour," and that the money was to pass through Mr. Scully's hands.

While, however, the great Pincher and Macabaw question was yet undecided, an event occurred to Mr. Scully, which had a great

influence upon his after-life. A second grand banquet was given at the Earl of Mantrap's: Lady Mantrap requested him to conduct Lady Gorgon to dinner; and the latter, with a charming timidity, and a gracious melancholy look into his face (after which her veined eyelids veiled her azure eyes), put her hand into the trembling one of Mr. Scully and said, as much as looks could say, "Forgive and forget."

Down went Scully to dinner. There were dukes on his right hand and earls on his left; there were but two persons without title in the midst of that glittering assemblage; the very servants looked like noblemen. The cook had done wonders; the wines were cool and rich, and Lady Gorgon was splendid! What attention did everybody pay to her and to him! Why *would* she go on gazing into his face with that tender, imploring look? In other words, Scully, after partaking of soup and fish, (he, during their discussion, had been thinking over all the former love-and-hate passages between himself and Lady Gorgon,) turned very red, and began talking to her.

"Were you not at the opera on Tuesday?" began he, assuming at once the airs of a man of fashion. "I thought I caught a glimpse of you in the Duchess of Diddlebury's box."

"Opera, Mr. Scully?" (pronouncing the word "Scully" with the utmost softness.) "Ah, no! we seldom go, and yet too often. For serious persons the enchantments of that place are too dangerous. I am so nervous—so delicate; the smallest trifle so agitates, depresses, or irritates me, that I dare not yield myself up to the excitement of music. I am too passionately attached to it; and, shall I tell you? it has such a strange influence upon me, that the smallest false note almost drives me to distraction, and for that very reason I hardly ever go to a concert or a ball."

"Egad," thought Scully, "I recollect when she would dance down a matter of five-and-forty couple, and jingle away at the 'Battle of Prague' all day."

She continued: "Don't you recollect, I do, with—oh, what regret! —that day at Oldborough race-ball, when I behaved with such sad rudeness to you? You will scarcely believe me, and yet I assure you 'tis the fact, the music had made me almost mad. Do let me ask your pardon for my conduct. I was not myself. Oh, Mr. Scully! I am no worldly woman; I know my duties, and I feel my wrongs. Nights and days have I lain awake weeping and thinking of that unhappy day—that I should ever speak so to an old friend: for we *were* old friends, were we not?"

Scully did not speak; but his eyes were bursting out of his head; and his face was the exact colour of a deputy-lieutenant's uniform.

"That I should ever forget myself and you so! How I have been longing for this opportunity to ask you to forgive me! I asked Lady Mantrap, when I heard you were to be here, to invite me to her party. Come, I know you will forgive me—your eyes say you will. You used to look so in old days, and forgive me my caprices *then*. Do give me a little wine—we will drink to the memory of old days."

Her eyes filled with tears; and poor Scully's hand caused such a rattling and trembling of the glass and the decanter that the Duke of Doldrum—who had been, during the course of this whispered sentimentality, describing a famous run with the Queen's hounds at the top of his voice—stopped at the jingling of the glass, and his tale was lost for ever. Scully hastily drank his wine, and Lady Gorgon turned round to her next neighbour, a little gentleman in black, between whom and herself certain conscious looks passed.

"I am glad poor Sir George is not here," said he, smiling.

Lady Gorgon said, "Pooh, for shame!" The little gentleman was no other than Josiah Crampton, Esq., that eminent financier, and he was now going through the curious calculation before mentioned, by which you *buy a man for nothing*. He intended to pay the very same price for Sir George Gorgon, too, but there was no need to tell the baronet so; only of this the reader must be made aware.

While Mr. Crampton was conducting this intrigue, which was to bring a new recruit to the Ministerial ranks, his mighty spirit condescended to ponder upon subjects of infinitely less importance, and to arrange plans for the welfare of his nephew and the young woman to whom he had made a present of his heart. These young persons, as we said before, had arranged to live in Mr. Perkins's own house in Bedford Row. It was of a peculiar construction, and might more properly be called a house and a half: for a snug little tenement of four chambers protruded from the back of the house into the garden. These rooms communicated with the drawing-rooms occupied by Mr. Scully; and Perkins, who acted as his friend and secretary, used frequently to sit in the one nearest the Member's study, in order that he might be close at hand to confer with that great man. The rooms had a private entrance too, were newly decorated, and in them the young couple proposed to live; the kitchen and garrets being theirs likewise. What more could they need? We are obliged to be particular in describing these apartments, for extraordinary events occurred therein.

To say the truth, until the present period Mr. Crampton had taken no great interest in his nephew's marriage, or, indeed, in the young man himself. The old gentleman was of a saturnine turn, and inclined to undervalue the qualities of Mr. Perkins, which were idleness, simplicity, enthusiasm, and easy good-nature.

"Such fellows never do anything in the world," he would say, and for such he had accordingly the most profound contempt. But when, after John Perkins's repeated entreaties, he had been induced to make the acquaintance of Miss Gorgon, he became instantly charmed with her, and warmly espoused her cause against her overbearing relations.

At his suggestion she wrote back to decline Sir George Gorgon's peremptory invitation, and hinted at the same time that she had attained an age and a position which enabled her to be the mistress of her own actions. To this letter there came an answer from Lady Gorgon which we shall not copy, but which simply stated that Miss Lucy Gorgon's conduct was unchristian, ungrateful, unladylike, and immodest; that the Gorgon family disowned her for the future, and left her at liberty to form whatever base connections she pleased.

"A pretty world this," said Mr. Crampton, in a great rage, when the letter was shown to him. "This same fellow, Scully, dissuades my nephew from taking a place, because Scully wants it for himself. This prude of a Lady Gorgon cries out shame, and disowns an innocent amiable girl: she a heartless jilt herself once, and a heartless flirt now. The Pharisees, the Pharisees! And to call mine a base family, too!"

Now, Lady Gorgon did not in the least know Mr. Crampton's connection with Mr. Perkins, or she would have been much more guarded in her language; but whether she knew it or not, the old gentleman felt a huge indignation, and determined to have his revenge.

"That's right, uncle! *Shall* I call Gorgon out?" said the impetuous young Perkins, who was all for blood.

"John, you are a fool," said his uncle. "You shall have a better revenge: you shall be married from Sir George Gorgon's house, and you shall see Mr. William Pitt Scully sold for nothing." This to the veteran diplomatist seemed to be the highest triumph which man could possibly enjoy.

It was very soon to take place: and, as has been the case ever since the world began, woman, lovely woman was to be the cause of Scully's

fall. The tender scene at Lord Mantrap's was followed by many others equally sentimental. Sir George Gorgon called upon his colleague the very next day, and brought with him a card from Lady Gorgon inviting Mr. Scully to dinner. The attorney eagerly accepted the invitation, was received in Baker Street by the whole amiable family with much respectful cordiality, and was pressed to repeat his visits as country neighbours should. More than once did he call, and somehow always at the hour when Sir George was away at his club, or riding in the Park, or elsewhere engaged. Sir George Gorgon was very old, very feeble, very much shattered in constitution. Lady Gorgon used to impart her fears to Mr. Scully every time he called there, and the sympathizing attorney used to console her as best he might. Sir George's country agent neglected the property—his lady consulted Mr. Scully concerning it. He knew to a fraction how large her jointure was; how she was to have Gorgon Castle for her life; and how, in the event of the young baronet's death (he, too, was a sickly poor boy), the chief part of the estates, bought by her money, would be at her absolute disposal.

"What a pity these odious politics prevent me from having you for our agent," would Lady Gorgon say; and indeed Scully thought it was a pity too. Ambitious Scully! what wild notions filled his brain. He used to take leave of Lady Gorgon and ruminate upon these things; and when he was gone, Sir George and her ladyship used to laugh.

"If we can but commit him—if we can but make him vote for Pincher," said the General, "my peerage is secure. Hawksby and Crampton as good as told me so."

The point had been urged upon Mr. Scully repeatedly and adroitly. "Is not Pincher a more experienced man than Macabaw?" would Sir George say to his guest over their wine. Scully allowed it. "Can't you vote for him on personal grounds and say so in the House?" Scully wished he could,—how he wished he could! Every time the General coughed, Scully saw his friend's desperate situation more and more, and thought how pleasant it would be to be lord of Gorgon Castle. "Knowing my property," cried Sir George, "as you do, and with your talents and integrity, what a comfort it would be could I leave you as guardian to my boy! But these cursed politics prevent it, my dear fellow. Why *will* you be a Radical?" And Scully cursed politics too. "Hang the low-bred rogue," added Sir George, when William Pitt Scully left the house: "he will do everything but promise."

"My dear General," said Lady Gorgon, sidling up to him and patting him on his old yellow cheek—"My dear Georgy, tell me one thing,—are you jealous?"

"Jealous, my dear! and jealous of *that* fellow—pshaw!"

"Well, then, give me leave, and you shall have the promise to-morrow."

* * * * *

To-morrow arrived. It was a remarkably fine day, and in the forenoon Mr. Perkins gave his accustomed knock at Scully's study, which was only separated from his own sitting-room by a double door. John had wisely followed his uncle's advice, and was on the best terms with the honourable Member.

"Here are a few sentences," said he, "which I think may suit your purpose. Great public services—undeniable merit—years of integrity—cause of reform, and Macabaw for ever!" He put down the paper. It was, in fact, a speech in favour of Mr. Macabaw.

"Hush," said Scully, rather surlily: for he was thinking how disagreeable it was to support Macabaw; and besides, there were clerks in the room, whom the thoughtless Perkins had not at first perceived. As soon as that gentleman saw them, "You are busy, I see," continued he in a lower tone. "I came to say that I must be off duty to-day, for I am engaged to take a walk with some ladies of my acquaintance."

So saying, the light-hearted young man placed his hat unceremoniously on his head, and went off through his own door, humming a song. He was in such high spirits that he did not even think of closing the doors of communication, and Scully looked after him with a sneer.

"Ladies, forsooth," thought he; "I know who they are. This precious girl that he is fooling with, for one, I suppose." He was right: Perkins was off on the wings of love, to see Miss Lucy; and she and aunt Biggs and uncle Crampton had promised this very day to come and look at the apartments which Mrs. John Perkins was to occupy with her happy husband.

"Poor devil," so continued Mr. Scully's meditations, "it is almost too bad to do him out of his place; but my Bob wants it, and John's girl has, I hear, seven thousand pounds. His uncle will get him another place before all that money is spent." And herewith Mr. Scully began conning the speech which Perkins had made for him.

He had not read it more than six times,—in truth, he was getting it by heart,—when his head clerk came to him from the front room,

bearing a card: a footman had brought it, who said his lady was waiting below. Lady Gorgon's name was on the card! To seize his hat and rush downstairs was, with Mr. Scully, the work of an infinitesimal portion of time.

It was indeed Lady Gorgon, in her Gorgonian chariot.

"Mr. Scully," said she, popping her head out of window and smiling in a most engaging way, "I want to speak to you on something very particular *indeed*"—and she held him out her hand. Scully pressed it most tenderly: he hoped all heads in Bedford Row were at the windows to see him. "I can't ask you into the carriage, for you see the governess is with me, and I want to talk secrets to you."

"Shall I go and make a little promenade?" said mademoiselle, innocently. And her mistress hated her for that speech.

"No. Mr. Scully, I am sure, will let me come in for five minutes?"

Mr. Scully was only too happy. My lady descended and walked upstairs, leaning on the happy solicitor's arm. But how should he manage? The front room was consecrated to clerks; there were clerks too, as ill-luck would have it, in his private room. "Perkins is out for the day," thought Scully; "I will take her into his room." And into Perkins's room he took her—ay, and he shut the double doors after him too, and trembled as he thought of his own happiness.

"What a charming little study," said Lady Gorgon, seating herself. And indeed it was very pretty: for Perkins had furnished it beautifully, and laid out a neat tray with cakes, a cold fowl, and sherry, to entertain his party withal. "And do you bachelors always live so well?" continued she, pointing to the little cold collation.

Mr. Scully looked rather blank when he saw it, and a dreadful suspicion crossed his soul; but there was no need to trouble Lady Gorgon with explanations: therefore, at once, and with much presence of mind, he asked her to partake of his bachelor's fare (she would refuse Mr. Scully nothing that day). A pretty sight would it have been for young Perkins to see strangers so unceremoniously devouring his feast. She drank—Mr. Scully drank—and so emboldened was he by the draught that he actually seated himself by the side of Lady Gorgon, on John Perkins's new sofa.

Her ladyship had of course something to say to him. She was a pious woman, and had suddenly conceived a violent wish for building a chapel-of-ease at Oldborough, to which she entreated him to subscribe. She enlarged upon the benefits that the town would derive from it, spoke of Sunday-schools, sweet spiritual instruction, and the duty of all well-minded persons to give aid to the scheme.

"I will subscribe a hundred pounds," said Scully, at the end of her ladyship's harangue: "would I not do anything for you?"

"Thank you, thank you, dear Mr. Scully," said the enthusiastic woman. (How the "dear" went burning through his soul!) "Ah!" added she, "if you *would* but do anything for me—if you, who are so eminently, so truly distinguished, in a religious point of view, would but see the truth in politics too; and if I could see your name among those of the true patriot party in this empire, how blest—oh! how blest, should I be! Poor Sir George often says he should go to his grave happy, could he but see you the guardian of his boy; and I, your old friend, (for we *were* friends, William,) how have I wept to think of you as one of those who are bringing our monarchy to ruin. Do, do promise me this too!" And she took his hand and pressed it between hers.

The heart of William Pitt Scully, during this speech, was thumping up and down with a frightful velocity and strength. His old love, the agency of the Gorgon property—the dear widow—five thousand a year clear—a thousand delicious hopes rushed madly through his brain, and almost took away his reason. And there she sat—she, the loved one, pressing his hand and looking softly into his eyes.

Down, down he plumped on his knees.

"Juliana!" shrieked he, "don't take away your hand! My love—my only love!—speak but those blessed words again! Call me William once more, and do with me what you will."

Juliana cast down her eyes and said, in the very smallest type,

"William!"

* * * * *

—when the door opened, and in walked Mr. Crampton, leading Mrs. Biggs, who could hardly contain herself for laughing, and Mr. John Perkins, who was squeezing the arm of Miss Lucy. They had heard every word of the two last speeches.

For at the very moment when Lady Gorgon had stopped at Mr. Scully's door, the four above-named individuals had issued from Great James Street into Bedford Row.

Lucy cried out that it was her aunt's carriage, and they all saw Mr. Scully come out, bare-headed, in the sunshine, and my lady descend, and the pair go into the house. They meanwhile entered by Mr. Perkins's own private door, and had been occupied in examining the delightful rooms on the ground-floor, which were to be his dining-room and library—from which they ascended a stair to visit the other two rooms, which were to form Mrs. John Perkins's drawing-room and

bedroom. Now whether it was that they trod softly, or that the stairs were covered with a grand new carpet and drugget, as was the case, or that the party within were too much occupied in themselves to heed any outward disturbances, I know not; but Lucy, who was advancing with John, (he was saying something about one of the apartments, the rogue!)—Lucy suddenly started and whispered, "There is somebody in the rooms!" and at that instant began the speech already reported, "*Thank you, thank you, dear Mr. Scully,*" &c. &c.,

which was delivered by Lady Gorgon in a full, clear voice; for, to do her ladyship justice, *she* had not one single grain of love for Mr. Scully, and, during the delivery of her little oration, was as cool as the coolest cucumber.

Then began the impassioned rejoinder, to which the four listened on the landing-place; and then the little "*William,*" as narrated above: at which juncture Mr. Crampton thought proper to rattle at the door, and after a brief pause, to enter with his party.

"William" had had time to bounce off his knees, and was on a chair at the other end of the room.

"What, Lady Gorgon!" said Mr. Crampton, with excellent surprise, "how delighted I am to see you! Always, I see, employed in works of charity," (the chapel-of-ease paper was on her knees,) "and on such an occasion, too,—it is really the most wonderful coincidence! My dear madam, here is a silly fellow, a nephew of mine, who is going to marry a silly girl, a niece of your own."

"Sir, I—" began Lady Gorgon, rising.

"They heard every word," whispered Mr. Crampton, eagerly. "Come forward, Mr. Perkins, and show yourself." Mr. Perkins made a genteel bow. "Miss Lucy, please to shake hands with your aunt; and this, my dear madam, is Mrs. Biggs, of Mecklenburgh Square, who, if she were not too old, might marry a gentleman in the Treasury, who is your very humble servant." And with this gallant speech, old Mr. Crampton began helping everybody to sherry and cake.

As for William Pitt Scully, he had disappeared, evaporated, in the most absurd, sneaking way imaginable. Lady Gorgon made good her retreat presently, with much dignity, her countenance undismayed, and her face turned resolutely to the foe.

* * * * *

About five days afterwards, that memorable contest took place in the House of Commons, in which the partisans of Mr. Macabaw were so very nearly getting him the Speakership. On the day that the report of the debate appeared in *The Times*, there appeared also an announcement in the *Gazette* as follows :—

"The King has been pleased to appoint John Perkins, Esq., to be Deputy-Subcomptroller of his Majesty's Tape Office and Custos of the Sealing-Wax Department."

Mr. Crampton showed this to his nephew with great glee, and was chuckling to think how Mr. William Pitt Scully would be annoyed, who had expected the place, when Perkins burst out laughing and said, "By heavens, here is my own speech ! Scully has spoken every word of it ; he has only put in Mr. Pincher's name in the place of Mr. Macabaw's.'

"He is ours now," responded his uncle, "and I told you *we would have him for nothing*. I told you, too, that you should be married from Sir George Gorgon's, and here is proof of it."

It was a letter from Lady Gorgon, in which she said that, "had she known Mr. Perkins to be a nephew of her friend Mr. Crampton, she never for a moment would have opposed his marriage with her niece, and she had written that morning to her dear Lucy, begging that the marriage breakfast should take place in Baker Street."

"It shall be in Mecklenburgh Square," said John Perkins stoutly ; and in Mecklenburgh Square it was.

William Pitt Scully, Esq., was, as Mr. Crampton said, hugely annoyed at the loss of the place for his nephew. He had still, however, his hopes to look forward to, but these were unluckily dashed by the coming in of the Whigs. As for Sir George Gorgon, when he came to ask about his peerage, Hawksby told him that they could not afford to lose him in the Commons, for a Liberal Member would infallibly fill his place.

And now that the Tories are out and the Whigs are in, strange to say a Liberal does fill his place. This Liberal is no other than Sir

George Gorgon himself, who is still longing to be a lord, and his lady is still devout and intriguing. So that the Members for Oldborough have changed sides, and taunt each other with apostasy, and hate each other cordially. Mr. Crampton still chuckles over the manner in which he tricked them both, and talks of those five minutes during which he stood on the landing-place, and hatched and executed his "Bedford-Row Conspiracy."

END OF THE "BEDFORD-ROW CONSPIRACY."

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